PRACTICAL ALLERGY

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by

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Preface

A major portion of allergy practice currently is in the hands of the general practitioner and of the specialist whose practice is not limited to allergy and who does not devote much of his time to this important and increasing phase of medical practice This, in part, is a result of the simplification and standardization of skin testing procedures and the availability of potent and long lasting allergy extracts from commercial sources Because of this, a much larger segment of the population with allergic diseases is receiving more allergy therapy than previously when all the available allergy care was concentrated in very limited practices

Yet despite numerous postgraduate courses offered each year and the voluminous literature available on the subject, the knowledge of the part time allergist has not kept pace with his increasing practice To some extent, this is due to the apparent controversies and paradoxes which one notes when trying to read the current literature on allergy in medical journals and in available textbooks

Admittedly all answers to questions in this complex field of hypersensitivity diseases are not known The specialty of allergy is in a period of transition from treatment on a more or less empiric basis to that of an increasing awareness and understanding of the interrelationships of the hyperimmune response the glands of internal secretion the relation of serotonin to anaphylactic shock and such diverse factors as changes in barometric pressure and personal emotional problems The fact remains however, that the bulk of the patients with uncomplicated allergy, such as hay fever, are

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being treated by the physician who is not particularly concerned with the unexplained aspects of this dynamic subject. Therefore, there is need for a comparatively simple textbook which this doctor can use and refer to, a *vade mecum* of the handling of diseases of allergic origin.

This text, which we hope fills this need, is based on the experience of the authors in teaching senior medical students at the College of Medical Evangelists, Los Angeles, California. In our opinion, if there is any one fault in this volume, it is that of oversimplification. This is intentional and is designed to enhance the ability of the doctor to treat the patient with hypersensitivity disease.

We hope, in addition, that the medical student, in fighting his way through the complex maze of specialty courses, will find this book useful, uncomplicated, and practical.

We acknowledge our indebtedness to Dr. Bernard Appel of Tufts University, School of Medicine, for his review of the chapter DRUG ALLERGY, to Dr. Manuel Brown of Tulsa, Oklahoma, for his review of the chapter, THE NATURE OF THE ALLERGIC REACTION, and to Dr. H. E. McMinn, Professor of Botany (Emeritus), Mills College, Oakland, California, for his collaboration on the Pollination Table in Chapter 6 and for the use of his photographs of allergenic plants. We owe our thanks to Mr. Robert Craven of F. A. Davis Company (U.S.A.) who gave freely of his advice in preparation of this volume and to Mr. H. C. N. Henry of Butterworths (London) for his encouragement. We are also grateful to Hazel Kershner who worked laboriously in typing the manuscript.

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CHAPTER 1

History of Allergy

The earliest record of what may have been an allergic reaction is in the year 3000 B C when Shen Nung Emperor of China forbade pregnant women to eat fish (especially shrimp) chicken, or horsemeat He thought ingestion of these foods was causing ulceration of the skin In the first century B C, Lucretius uttered his oft-quoted maxim, One man s meat is another man s poison It is usually considered that he had allergy in mind Migraine, now considered by many due to an allergic reaction, was first described by Aretaeus in A D 110 Galen (A D 130 200) was another early investigator who described migraine He made further observation that some individuals always sneezed in the presence of certain flowers and plants although, of course, he had no conception of the process involved

In the Babylonian Talmud (Fifth Century A D), a treatment for gastrointestinal symptoms suspicious of egg allergy is described Egg white in small increasing amounts was prescribed this corresponds amazingly to present-day food allergy desensitization The literature of the early Jews abounds in dietary restrictions and food prohibitions which suggests that observed reactions were allergic in nature The term asthma first appears in the writings of Hippocrates In his sixty fourth aphorism Hippocrates gives further evidence of his keen perception regarding allergy when he states that It is a bad thing to give milk to persons having headache

Knowledge continued despite lack of recording and it is not until the Sixteenth Century that we find record of further allergy observations The effect of plants, flowers, shrubs, or trees on certain individuals, recognized earlier by Galen, was again recognized in 1565 by Botallus, by Van Helmont in 1600, and by Benningerus in 1673 Ledel and Hunerwold ten years later and De Rebecque and Riedlin in the 1690 s leaned toward a theory that roses caused sneezing attacks Willis in 1621 was one of the first to suggest that certain foods could cause asthmatic paroxysms Timaeus in 1667 and Scott in 1776 described asthma as due to inhalation, specifically the effluvia' of ipecacanha

On an especially cold day in February, 1633, Samuel Pepys, while walking through a park, suffered an asthmatic attack Whether the attack was really due to the cold can not be established, but it has been described as an early example of physical allergy Later, Bouron in 1863 described a case of urticaria and syncope due to cold and there is a classic description of urticaria due to cold which appears in the medical literature published by Blachez in 1872

The first formal report of a fatal anaphylactic reaction following the injection of foreign protein into the human circulation was published by Dennis in 1667 when the death of a mentally deranged patient occurred after a second transfusion of calf s blood The mechanism by which death was produced in these cases was not understood until 1875 when it was demonstrated that animal serum actually hemolyzed human red blood corpuscles

In 1819, the London physician, John Bostock reported a Case of a Periodical Affection of the Eyes and Chest which was in essence a history of his own affliction His description of the sequence of hay fever symptoms is a classic In part, he said

'About the beginning or middle of June in every year the following symptoms make their appearance with a greater or less degree of

violence A sensation of heat and fullness is experienced in the eyes first along the edge of the lid and especially in the inner angles but after some time over the whole of the ball At the commencement the external appearance of the eye is little affected except that there is a slight degree of redness and a discharge of tears This state gradually increases until the sensation becomes converted into what may be characterized as a combination of the most acute itching and smarting accompanied with a feeling of small points striking upon or darting into the ball at the same time that the eyes become extremely inflamed and discharge very copiously a thick mucous fluid

After this state of the eyes has subsided for a week or ten days a general fullness is experienced in the head and particularly about the forepart to this succeeds irritation of the nose producing sneezing which occurs in fits of extreme violence coming on in paroxysms at uncertain intervals To the sneezings are added a further sensation of tightness of the chest and a difficulty of breathing with a general irritation of the fauces and trachea There is no absolute pain in any part of the chest but a feeling of want of room to receive the air necessary for respiration a huskiness of the voice and an incapacity of speaking aloud for any time without inconvenience

Nine years later in 1828 Bostock read a second paper This was entitled Of the Catarrhus Aestivus or Summer Catarrh In this paper Bostock used the term hay fever for the first time In 1836 John Elliotson another Englishman experimented with pollen and formally suggested in a medically published paper that the disease actually was due to pollen sensitivity But it was Charles Harrison Blackley of Manchester who by means of a skin test in 1867, proved and identified grass pollen as the fundamental cause of hay fever He described his findings as follows

Whilst I was still suffering from my usual attack of hay fever during the summer of 1865 (July 13th) as much pollen as could be obtained from two anthers on the Lolium Italicum was applied to the center of the anterior surface of one forearm after the skin had been abraded as in the ordinary mode of vaccinating A space of about a quarter of an inch was abraded and to this the quantity of pollen named was applied after being placed on a piece of wet lint the size of the abrasion This was covered with a piece of thin gutta

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human beings who received a second injection of smallpox vaccine or horse serum several days after the first, preferred to designate this as *allergy* rather than anaphylaxis because it was regardless of cause, a *changed state* or altered reactivity He suggested this term, allergy, in 1906 and it now has become widely accepted in medicine and by the laity despite other terms that have been suggested from time to time

Once the fundamentals of allergy were described, or what at any rate were thought to be the fundamentals the diagnosis of allergic disorders and their treatment made astounding progress In 1911 in England, Noon demonstrated the skin reaction of allergic individuals to pollen or pollen extracts when applied to the slightly abraded skin His findings were substantiated by Freeman, also of England Noon then began to treat hay fever patients with subcutaneous extracts of pollen and in 1915, Cooke in the United States reported his results in a series of 144 hay fever *patients* treated similarly Meanwhile, Schloss of New York, in 1912, had reported his investigation of a child with food skin tests

In 1914 Osler suggested that *angioneurotic edema*, described originally by Quincke in 1882, was due to *anaphylaxis* Osler, incidentally, in his numerous articles on angioneurotic edema and as early as 1888, emphasized the existence of colic, nausea and vomiting that often accompanied this condition He thus laid the groundwork for gastrointestinal allergy which has received further *impetus* from Rowe whose elimination diets and a description of food allergies has influenced the field of allergy greatly during the past three decades

In dermatological allergy, the names of Jadassohn in Europe and Sulzberger and Wise in the United States are well known It was Jadassohn in 1896 who developed the patch test in a patient who was sensitive to mercury Sulzberger and Wise and Ramirez and Eller in the early nineteen thirties expanded its use in the United States and

percha and the whole was held in position by a strip of adhesive plaster The center of the other forearm was treated in exactly the same manner save and except that no pollen was applied to it The scratching with the lancet raised a wheal such as is seen in the urticaria or in stinging with nettles In a few minutes after the pollen had been applied the abraded spot began to itch intensely the parts immediately around the abrasion began to swell but this was not apparently due to any action of the *cutis vera* The swelling attained its maximum in six hours and then remained stationary for another eight hours after this it gradually subsided and in forty eight hours it had entirely disappeared The arm to which no pollen had been applied did not exhibit any sign of swelling

In 1903, W P Dunbar of Hamburg, Germany, stimulated by the work of Bostock and Blackley, confirmed their observation that certain grass pollens caused hay fever At about this same time, however, an important experiment bearing on allergy was reported by Richet While traveling in the Indian Ocean a few years earlier, Richet had been impressed with the urticarial reaction produced on contact with the Portuguese man of war, a jelly fish Continuing his experiments in France, he inoculated dogs with an extract of the sea anemone, a variety of stinging nettle and found that, although the first injection was entirely harmless, a second injection, if given after a certain interval of time resulted in a severe toxic reaction sometimes fatal It was Richet and his associates, Hericourt and Portier, who correlated their observations with the increasing reports of untoward reactions resulting from the use of the newly discovered diphtheria antitoxin and propounded the basic concepts which still remain valid (1) A foreign substance on first injection is harmless on reinjection may be harmful or even fatal, (2) an interval of several days is necessary between injections For this he coined the term *anaphylaxis*, which literally means de protection and is in contrast with *prophylaxis*, or preprotection

Clemens von Pirquet, observing a similar reaction in

human beings who received a second injection of smallpox vaccine or horse serum several days after the first preferred to designate this as *allergy* rather than anaphylaxis because it was regardless of cause a *changed state* or altered reactivity He suggested this term allergy in 1906 and it now has become widely accepted in medicine and by the laity despite other terms that have been suggested from time to time

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demonstrated that allergic individuals may react with definite skin lesions to contactants which are innocuous to the nonallergic individual In practically every phase of medicine, allergy has been described as a possible etiological factor Thus, we find genitourinary allergy described in urological journals, allergic arthropathy described in journals devoted to orthopedics, migraine and epilepsy due to allergy in periodicals whose main interest is in the field of neurology The heart and blood vessels have been indicted as a site of allergy as well as the eye In recent years, the collagen diseases also have been investigated because of their allergic connotation

Medicine is in a state of progress There is no interruption of the processes of life or suspension of its laws Allergy undoubtedly, plays an important role in the vitality of the living organism To what extent, we do not yet know, except to state that men whose lives are devoted to laboratory research, and physicians whose training permits them to evaluate clinically will continue to persevere and to find an answer to the obscure ills which beset mankind of this, in the field of allergy, there are many Much still remains to be known about the causation of allergy, the mechanism of allergic response, improvement in therapy and management

CHAPTER 2

Nature of the Allergic Reaction

Allergic disease is considered fundamentally to be an immunological mechanism, namely, an antigen antibody reaction. Before discussing this mechanism and reaction, it is expedient to define commonly used terms in order to obviate any essence of confusion. The history of allergy, as described in the previous chapter, made use of some of these terms and in many instances indicated their meanings. However, more exacting definitions will be helpful.

DEFINITIONS

ALLERGY:

This is an altered reaction, or more fully, an acquired, specific alteration of the capability to react, based on an antigen antibody reaction. The reaction is *altered,* that is, it is different from the expected or normal reaction. It is *acquired,* indicating that the individual must have had previous contact with the inciting offender for the reaction to be considered allergic, although this contact may be difficult to demonstrate. It is *specific* in the sense that a person allergic to a certain substance is individually allergic to that substance and not necessarily to others. For example, the reaction of an individual allergic to egg white is a constant

one Although he may be allergic to other factors, his allergic reaction to egg white is distinctive. *Capability to react* indicates that the person does not always react although he is capable of doing so An important factor should not be overlooked in the definition That is, that this altered reaction or response is due to an antigen antibody reaction although we are not always able to demonstrate the presence of the antibodies

ANTIGEN:

This is a substance which, when introduced into the body, induces the production of antibodies and later, upon subsequent introduction, is able to unite with them to produce a reaction The antigen is a large molecule formerly thought to be protein in nature, but now known to be polysaccharide or lipoid as well Simple chemicals and other small particle substances may be antigenic but cannot be considered to be complete antigens The terms *allergen* and *atopen* are practically synonomous and are used to indicate antigens in clinical allergy

ANTIBODY:

This is a substance produced in the body in response to the introduction of an antigen and which upon subsequent introduction of the antigen, is capable of reacting with it specifically It is apparent that these definitions for antigen and antibody are interdependent but this cannot be avoided Antibodies can be identified only by a specific biological reaction Antibodies are specific for the antigen which produces them They are formed in the gamma globulin fraction of the blood The concept that antibody is modified globulin, specific because it is spatially the mirror image of the antigen, is gaining acceptance *Reagin* is a term applied to an allergic antibody clinically

SENSITIZATION:

This is the production of the altered capacity to react To sensitize an animal is to bring it in contact with an antigen so that specific antibodies are formed

HYPERSENSITIVITY:

The result of the antigen antibody reaction is not always in the direction of overactivity This is obvious in bacterial immunity where the antibody unites with the antigen in order to prevent disease In clinical allergy, most of the symptoms are on the basis of exaggeration of symptoms rather than prevention hence, the term hypersensitivity, merely indicating increased capability to react

ANAPHYLAXIS:

This can be considered the term best suited for the typical allergic reaction in which the antigen antibody union can be demonstrated For that reason it has been limited by some to the reaction as seen in the animal or to artificially produced allergy in humans However, most investigators feel that these are similar mechanisms and that inability to demonstrate the antibody at times in the human is due rather to our inadequate technics than to an actual absence of the antibody In this book the terms will be used synonomously

ATOPY:

This term was coined to indicate the clinical allergies with an hereditary element It has been extended to the adjective *atopic* synonomous with allergic and an allergic antigen has been designated as an *atopen*

SHOCK ORGAN:

The shock organ or shock tissue is the term employed to designate the site at which the manifestations of the antigen

antibody reaction takes place It is not known why certain sites and organs are chosen for the union of these elements to produce symptoms Since allergy symptoms are due to an antigen antibody union or reaction, the nature of the disease depends on the shock organ or tissue where this union or reaction takes place For example, when the shock tissue is in the nose, hay fever or allergic rhinitis results, when it is in the bronchi, asthma may be produced, when the skin is the shock tissue, dermatitis or urticaria may ensue

HAPTEN:

This may be defined as an incomplete antigen When it is introduced into the body, it will not induce the formation of antibodies, but when it is joined to a protein, it will cause the production of antibodies These antibodies will be specific under ordinary circumstances, not to the protein molecules, but to the hapten, that is, the chemical hooked onto the protein Simple chemicals produce allergic reactions by their hapten quality

THE ALLERGIC REACTION

REQUIREMENTS:

There are several preliminary conditions necessary for allergic symptoms to occur (1) Primary contact with the antigen with consequent formation of antibodies as a result of the exposure (2) the fixation of these antibodies in shock tissue, (3) re exposure to the specific antigen followed by antigen antibody union (4) liberation of histamine, histamine like substances and possibly serotonin, (5) effect of these chemicals on pertinent vascular, glandular and muscular tissues The best example of an allergic reaction is the traditional laboratory experiment in animals In this experiment, the animal is injected with a foreign substance

This is the sensitizing dose the *exposure* aspect of the preparatory steps listed above and the *acquired* aspect of the definition Following this initial injection there is an incubation period during which time antibodies specific to the antigen injected are being formed This period varies with the animal Usually a period of two or three weeks insures the presence of a maximum amount of antibodies

The animal is then given an injection of the same substance administered at the first injection The second dose may not necessarily be as large as the initial one This is the *shocking* dose and results in a violent reaction *anaphylactic shock* due to the release of histamine and other chemical substances This reaction differs with the type of animal used in the experiment but never with the type of antigen used In the guinea pig the symptoms are due to bronchospasm and if the shocking dose is large enough the animal dies in asphyxia In the rabbit spasm of the pulmonary arterioles results and the animal is usually described as dying of right heart failure although respiratory deaths have also been reported The dog characteristically dies a liver death from dilatation of the portal veins

The authors experienced and reported a case of human anaphylactic shock where a sensitive patient was shocked with the cottonseed antigen On autopsy there was a mixture of the guinea pig and the rabbit types of reaction There was marked distention of the lungs as well as of the right side of the heart It would appear that humans do not respond with a specific shock tissue as do some animals This may explain in part the variability in allergy symptoms encountered in practice

CRITERIA

The following criteria distinguish an allergic reaction from other symptoms which may appear similar

1 There must be a previous exposure, no allergic reactions occur on initial exposure

2 The reaction must be altered, that is, it must be different from the normal expected reaction which the average *person encounters Everybody will sneeze when a pinch* of tobacco or pepper is placed into the nose, but only a small percentage of people will sneeze when an equal amount of ragweed pollen is snuffed into the nose Tobacco and pepper are primary irritants, and sneezing is the expected response Ragweed pollen, however, is an allergen and only a susceptible person will sneeze when he comes in contact with it Susceptibility, of course, implies that the person is allergic or has the capability of reacting and that he has been sensitized by previous contact with the pollen Previous contact has caused antibodies specific for the ragweed pollen to be formed in his nasal mucosa

3 *The reaction must not be an expected pharmacological* reaction to the substance This is related to the previous criterion Everyone will experience ringing of the ears if he takes enough quinine That is an expected pharmacological reaction despite the fact that some will require more quinine than others On the other hand only a very few people will develop a rash when they take quinine This is allergy

4 The reaction must be specific An example of this has already been given

5 The symptoms must be due to an antigen antibody reaction The simple allergy skin test in which a reaction is produced at *the test site is the best example* Here, an antigen antibody reaction is deliberately produced by joining a chosen antigen with the antibodies in the skin Another method of demonstrating the presence of antibodies is the so called *passive transfer* or Prausnitz Kustner reaction In

this a small amount of serum from a sensitive person pre sumably containing specific antibodies is injected within the layers of the skin of a nonsensitive individual By this means the skin sites are actually passively sensitized by depositing the antibodies When these particular sites are tested within a few days with the specific antigens a typical allergic reac tion will result at the site of injection while a similar test on an adjacent area of the skin where a preparatory injection was not done will be negative This of course proves the presence of specific antibodies in the serum of the donor whose blood was used to inject the nonallergic person Un fortunately the presence of specific circulating antibodies are not demonstrable in all allergic diseases

TYPES

There are three types of allergic reactions or forms of hypersensitivity The first is the *anaphylactic* or immediate *wheal type* of which the best clinical examples are hay fever urticaria bronchial asthma and eczema A second type is the *bacterial type* or *delayed type* of which skin reaction to tuberculin brucellergin histoplasmin and coccidioidin are the best examples A third type is the *eczematous or contact type* of which poison ivy oak or sumac dermatitis is the best example This is also a delayed reaction

It should be pointed out that there is no unanimous acceptance of this classification of the differences in the immunological mechanisms involved in these types of allergic reactions Some allergists noting the points of similarity between the bacterial and the eczematous type of allergy with particular reference to the delayed reaction time prefer to classify these in one category under the desig nation *delayed type of allergy* Other allergists do not recognize a differentiation between the eczematous contact type allergy and atopic dermatitis especially in infants where epidermal atopic sensitization is a strong probability

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CHAPTER 4

Laboratory Procedures

The most important laboratory procedure for the diagnosis of allergic disease is the allergy skin test, which will be discussed in Chapter 5. This is the keystone of allergy laboratory diagnosis. Other laboratory tests and procedures are helpful; some are diagnostic. None is pathognomonic. Among the frequently used accessory laboratory procedures, in addition to urinalysis, Wassermann, and blood pressure determination, are examination of the peripheral blood, study of cellular material in nasal and bronchial secretions, culture of secretions for bacteria and fungi, and pulmonary function studies. A complete blood count and hemoglobin estimation should be routine procedures since allergic individuals may possess additional pathology to that of an allergic nature which may directly influence the course of their illness.

RED BLOOD CELLS

There is no known alteration of the red blood cells that is produced as the direct result of clinical allergy. However, a low red blood cell count warrants further investigation. It may signify hemolytic anemia from drug sensitivity or some other form of allergy. From whatever source, a low red blood cell count may influence the course of allergic disease on a nonspecific basis. An increased number of red blood cells, polycythemia, may be the result of prolonged

BRONCHIAL SECRETIONS

These are examined in the same manner as nasal smears for the presence of eosinophiles In addition, gross observation of the bronchial secretion is of considerable informative value, especially in asthma Thick, stringy secretion indicates temporary dehydration and suggests the need of an increase in the patient s fluid intake Yellow or green sputum is indicative of infection and may call for the use of antibiotics Thin watery secretion is rarely associated with severe asthma symptoms since patients are usually able to cough up this material thus keeping the bronchial tubes comparatively free of obstruction

Microscopically smears of bronchial secretion will reveal eosinophiles or neutrophiles As in the nasal smear, a preponderance of eosinophiles suggests allergy, while a preponderance of neutrophiles denotes infection When infection predominates aggravates, or initiates asthma, culture for bacteria and fungi is indicated The bacterial culture may be used for antibiotic sensitivity tests. Where bacterial allergy is suspected the culture may be used as the basis of an autogenous vaccine Fungi found in bronchial secretions must be evaluated from the standpoint of pathogenicity

Other elements often found in the sputum of asthmatics are Charcot Leyden crystals pearls of Laennec and Curschmann s spirals The crystals are believed to be forms of transformed eosinophiles The pearls and spirals are casts of various segments of the bronchial tree formed from thick viscid mucus

MISCELLANEOUS

Urine examination may not only reveal kidney dysfunction but in severe asthma where it may be concentrated, it indicates dehydration and calls for increased intake of fluids The hematocrit may also be used as a guide for the need of adequate amounts of fluids in intractable asthma Polycy

red color and the nucleus is green, as are the nuclei of the remainder of the white blood cells

A more reliable and rapid method of counting eosinophiles has been described by J Tannen As compared to the phloxine in propylene glycol method of Randolph, this method makes use of an aqueous alkaline solution of neutral red iodide The usual white cell pipette is used and the counting of the eosinophiles is simplified because they alone are visible on the counting chamber

SEDIMENTATION RATE

The sedimentation rate is not normally elevated in uncomplicated allergic disease When it is elevated, infection as an accompanying complication, must be considered The same is true of the presence of the C reactive protein in the blood

NASAL SECRETIONS

A study of the cellular elements of the nasal secretion may aid in differentiating allergic rhinitis from rhinitis due to infection When one is superimposed upon the other, it may help to determine the relative existence of the two states

A preponderance of eosinophiles in a stained smear of nasal secretion, examined under the microscope, suggests allergy while a preponderance of neutrophiles indicates infection The nasal secretion is obtained by any of several methods, a convenient one is to ask the patient to blow his nose into a piece of waxed paper or a piece of cellophane paper A thin smear of this material is made on a glass slide Wright's, Giemsa's, or any other stain based on eosin and methylene blue used for differential white blood cell counts is adequate

tory capacity, which is the maximum volume inspired after the end of a normal quiet expiration and *expiratory reserve volume* the maximum which can be exhaled after the end of a normal quiet expiration

Tidal volume is the amount of air inhaled and exhaled during a normal quiet respiration Tidal volume or air plus *inspiratory reserve volume* (the maximum amount of air which can be inspired following a normal quiet inspiration) make up the *inspiratory capacity*

Functional residual capacity is the amount of air remaining in the lungs at the end of a normal quiet respiration It is subdivided into the *expiratory reserve volume* already defined and the *residual volume*, the air which is left in the lungs following a maximal forced expiration The *total lung capacity* is a combination of the *vital capacity* and the *residual volume* and represents the amount of air contained in the lungs after maximal inspiration

The interrelationship of these lung volumes is shown in the following outline

TOTAL LUNG CAPACITY

Inspiratory Capacity	Inspiratory Reserve Volume	Vital Capacity
	Tidal Volume	
Functional Residual Capacity	Expiratory Reserve Volume	
	Residual Volume	

MEASUREMENT OF LUNG VOLUMES:

Of these lung volumes the tidal volume the inspiratory reserve volume expiratory reserve volume and the vital capacity are measured directly as can be seen in the spirogram The residual volume and the total lung capacity must be measured indirectly In addition to the measurement of the volume of the subdivisions of the lung the element of time must be considered Pulmonary function or ventila

obstruction with that of restriction These elements are measured by pulmonary function tests

DESCRIPTION OF LUNG VOLUMES:

For many years, physiologists have divided the lung volumes into segments with such confusing names as complemental air, supplemental air, and reserve air At times

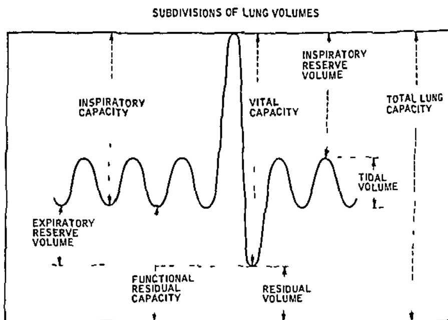


Fig 1 Respiratory tracing showing subdivisions of lung volumes

these definitions varied with the user In 1950 a standard nomenclature was adopted by pulmonary physiologists which has been generally accepted The subdivisions of the lung volumes, as they would appear on a spirometer tracing are shown graphically in Figure 1

Vital capacity is defined as the maximum volume of air which can be expelled from the lungs by voluntary effort after a maximal inspiration This is subdivided into *inspira*

tory capacity, which is the maximum volume inspired after the end of a normal quiet expiration and *expiratory reserve volume* the maximum which can be exhaled after the end of a normal quiet expiration

Tidal volume is the amount of air inhaled and exhaled during a normal quiet respiration Tidal volume or air plus *inspiratory reserve volume* (the maximum amount of air which can be inspired following a normal quiet inspiration) make up the inspiratory capacity

Functional residual capacity is the amount of air remaining in the lungs at the end of a normal quiet respiration It is subdivided into the *expiratory reserve volume* already defined and the *residual volume*, the air which is left in the lungs following a maximal forced expiration The *total lung capacity* is a combination of the *vital capacity* and the *residual volume* and represents the amount of air contained in the lungs after maximal inspiration

The interrelationship of these lung volumes is shown in the following outline

TOTAL LUNG CAPACITY		
Inspiratory Capacity	Inspiratory Reserve Volume	Vital Capacity
	Tidal Volume	
Functional Residual Capacity	Expiratory Reserve Volume	
	Residual Volume	

MEASUREMENT OF LUNG VOLUMES:

Of these lung volumes the tidal volume the inspiratory reserve volume expiratory reserve volume and the vital capacity are measured directly as can be seen in the spirogram The residual volume and the total lung capacity must be measured indirectly In addition to the measurement of the volume of the subdivisions of the lung the element of time must be considered Pulmonary function or ventila

at one sitting. Marking the skin sites on the arm with ink and with numbers that correspond with numbers previously placed on the allergen vials will prevent confusion in reading and recording the results

As one readily can see, intracutaneous testing requires a minimum of twenty sterilized syringes and needles for each series of tests, obviously, taking more time in preparation than the scratch method of skin testing The tests, however,

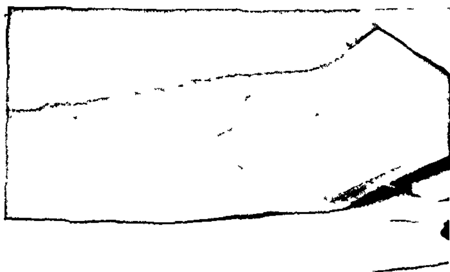


Fig 6 Whealing reactions to skin tests

are more sensitive and are read in a shorter period of time, from ten to fifteen minutes after introduction of the testing material They are graded in a manner similar to that of the scratch test averaging as follows A one plus (slight) reaction consists of a small wheal slightly larger than the head of a pin surrounded by little or no erythema No pseudopods are present A two plus (moderate) reaction consists of a wheal about 0 5 cm in diameter surrounded by slight erythema No pseudopods are present A three plus (moderate plus) reaction consists of a wheal close to 1 cm in diameter surrounded by a definite area of erythema

One or two pseudopods may be present. A four plus (marked) reaction consists of a wheal 1 cm or more in diameter surrounded by a large area of erythema. Several pseudopods are present extending in all directions. When there is just the faint appearance of a wheal or mild erythema, the reaction is classified as doubtful or negative and is of no clinical significance. An intracutaneous test with the diluent with which the allergen has been prepared must be used as a control.

STRENGTH OF SOLUTIONS

There is no universal standard regarding the strength of antigens used for testing. Each institution, experienced allergist and allergy supply firm has its own standards and recommendations. The allergists and clinics which make their own allergens are fully acquainted with the potency of their product and on the basis of experience use specific strengths for cutaneous and intracutaneous tests. Pharmaceutical companies which supply allergy extracts to physicians also are aware of the potency of their product. However, these houses recognize the fact that they may be selling their extracts to some doctors who are inexperienced in using powerful antigens. For that reason these are likely to be more dilute than those used by the experienced allergist and in well-established allergy clinics.

Roughly, the intradermal test is 100 times as reactive as the scratch, puncture, prick or any other modification of the cutaneous test. For that reason, if the scratch test is to precede the intradermal test, the latter must be less than 100 times more dilute than the scratch in order to be of any additional diagnostic value. A scratch test performed with a 1:50 dilution then followed with an intradermal test with a dilution of 1:5000 is merely repetition of the *same test*. This is the basis of many groups using intradermal tests exclusively in several dilutions *rather than the* scratch test followed by the intradermal test as is recommended here.

antigens to which a patient may be exquisitely sensitive, it would appear that the safest precaution against reactions of any type is to precede each intracutaneous test with the much less sensitive scratch test The first sign of a constitutional reaction usually is a flushing of the face or an itching of the palms of the hands This is quickly followed by generalized urticaria and angioedema, especially involving the eyes and the pharynx The nasal mucosa becomes edematous and edema of the bronchial mucosa with accompanying dyspnea and cough are dominant symptoms The conjunctivae become injected At the first sign of an ensuing constitutional reaction, a tourniquet should be applied proximal to the site of the tests (or injection if the reaction is due to a hypodermic injection) This is done to retard absorption of the antigens It is released when the constitutional reaction subsides At the same time, 0 3 to 0 5 cc of epinephrine hydrochloride 1 1000 should be injected in the opposite arm This area should be rubbed vigorously to stimulate rapid absorption of the epinephrine Two or three drops of epinephrine hydrochloride 1 1000 in the eyes helps to relieve the ophthalmic symptoms while a corresponding nasal pack or nose drops will reduce nasal mucous membrane edema If the patient is not relieved within a few minutes, the epinephrine injection should be repeated Aminophylline, 0 5 Gm (7½ gr) for intravenous injection, and other cardiac and respiratory stimulants should be at hand and readily available for emergency in case the patient fails to respond to the epinephrine Hydrocortisone should be used intravenously when there is a severe reaction

CARE OF SYRINGES AND NEEDLES IN ALLERGY SKIN TESTING

The care of the syringes and needles used in skin testing as well as in treating patients has received considerable attention The question has been raised that all the antigen is

not removed from a syringe by ordinary washing and that transmission of infection such as homologous serum hepatitis may be caused by contaminated needles or by the use of inadequately sterilized syringes

Flushing and washing the syringes and needles with a detergent solution then rinsing them thoroughly at least three times with hot running water followed by a final rinse in distilled water and either boiling them for at least ten minutes or autoclaving them for fifteen minutes at fifteen pounds pressure is the accepted method of cleaning and sterilization Should barrel and plunger become stuck allowing them to soak for five to twenty minutes in a detergent solution usually separates them If allowed to soak too long and too often the numbers on the barrel of most syringes tend to wash off In order to avoid any possible contamination of antigen syringes used in intradermal testing should not be interchanged *i e* the same syringe should be used to test with the same antigen each time To make certain that this is done some method of identifying the syringe must be adopted Marking the syringes at the top of the plunger with a number corresponding with the number on the antigen bottle is one way of accomplishing the purpose Another is to place around the barrel of the syringe a narrow metal band on which a number corresponding to the number on the antigen bottle has been stamped It is not necessary to wash and sterilize a testing syringe after each use although of course the *needle must* be A common practice is to keep the syringes in place for testing removing only the needles after each series of *skin tests* Once a week however all the syringes from the trays are removed thoroughly emptied and washed as outlined above They are then sterilized being certain as already indicated that when they are returned to the testing tray they are placed in the same order as originally Then they may be used for testing with the same antigen as previous to cleansing and sterilization

THE PASSIVE TRANSFER TEST

This is also known as the indirect method of testing of Prausnitz Kustner Although its accuracy is now question able, one may wish to use this method of testing, particularly with children who are difficult to test by one of the other methods described, and with those whose skin is not reliable for testing because of dermographia or where the skin has developed a leathery consistency, as in severe eczema

The technic is as follows Five to ten cc of blood are withdrawn from the allergic patient under sterile precau tions The blood is placed in a sterile centrifuge tube, defibri nated, filtered, and tested for sterility When the physician s office is not prepared to do this any clinical laboratory will prepare the serum and filter and test it for sterility With a tuberculin syringe, using a 26 gauge, 6 to 9 mm (1/4 to 3/8 inch) needle, the sterile serum is injected intracu taneously into individual sites in the skin of a nonallergic person in the manner usual for intracutaneous skin testing except that more fluid should be injected so as to produce a larger wheal The site of injection is marked with ink and the recipient is told to return twenty four hours later The ink marks are made so that when the serum has been absorbed, one may know where it had been injected It is at those particular sites that routine intradermal tests are made the following day Either the outer surface of the upper arm or the interscapular region may be used for the passive transfer tests The back is frequently used when doing passive transfer tests because constitutional reactions do not occur and one can do a larger number of tests at one sitting A positive reaction is observed twenty minutes after the test has been performed as an erythematous wheal, it is seldom graded

A well established routine is to do the test on the pre viously sensitized site as described and immediately repeat

the test on an adjacent skin site which has not been previously injected with the patient's serum, thus producing two parallel rows of tests When reading the reactions, a positive reaction in the sensitized site indicates a positive allergic reaction if the reaction in the adjacent nonsensitized site is negative When both are negative, the test, of course, is negative When both sites produce positive reactions, it implies the test is nonspecific, and, therefore, not a positive test

The antibodies in the patient's serum sensitize the skin sites for more than a twenty four hour period, therefore, if it is advisable, the recipient need not return for testing for forty eight or even seventy two hours after the serum was injected

There are at least two precautions that should be observed in doing passive transfer tests First, the recipient should not be an allergic individual Secondly, on the day of the tests the recipient should avoid eating such suspected allergenic foods as eggs, fish nuts, bananas corn, mustard, and chicken, since they have been accused of interfering with the accuracy of the test Indeed, on the day of the tests, it is wise for the recipient to refrain from eating any food to which a positive reaction may be expected from the patient's history

THE CONJUNCTIVAL TEST

When the cutaneous and intracutaneous tests are negative yet pollen or an inhalant sensitivity is still suspected, the conjunctival test may be the only means of corroboration This test is infrequently indicated and rarely used It is performed with serial dilutions of the suspected antigen and also with the dry powder One is advised to begin with a sterile 1 1000 dilution A single drop is placed in the conjunctival sac with an eye dropper If after five minutes no

Thus, the nature and composition of house dust varies with its source. The contents of a vacuum cleaner container after cleaning a wool rug may be much different from that where Persian or Oriental rugs are floor coverings. Similarly a home where feather pillows and down comforters are used will yield a different dust than where these items have been eliminated. For this reason it is sometimes necessary to secure a sample of house dust from its source and have manufactured a so-called "autogenous" dust extract for testing and treatment.

It is clear that house dust is not a specific unitarian allergen but rather is a combination of wool or other [illegible]

tients, but negative reactions in nonallergic individuals and in allergic individuals who are not sensitive to house dust.

ANIMAL HAIRS, FEATHERS, AND DANDER

DOG HAIR:

In any discussion of animal hairs, one considers not only the hair itself, but also the animal dander since the antigenic fraction commonly consists of animal dandruff or shreds of cast off, dead, epithelial cells, plus the sebum and other oils found on the skin of animals Intrinsically, dog dander is more antigenic than dog hair, and, therefore, allergy to the live animal is more severe than that caused by contact with the processed animal hair, as in furs and rugs Allergy to dog hair and dander is common, as one would expect, because it is such a popular domestic pet There is some evidence that allergy to one breed of dog does not necessarily indicate allergy to others However, this is not definite enough to recommend that one breed be substituted for another in the treatment of allergy to dog hair and dander The best advice cruel as it seems in homes where dogs are almost part of the family, is to dispose of the dog

Veterinarians are in intimate contact with most dog hairs as well as hairs from other animals, therefore, they are predisposed to development of animal hair allergy Some Chinese rugs are made with the hair of members of the canine family and may be the source of trouble

CAT HAIR:

Cat hair and the protein of cat dander is a powerful sensitizer of respiratory allergy Occasionally, where a susceptible *individual* merely holds a cat or rubs its hair along its skin, a reaction will occur The fact that this type of animal lends itself to cuddling, encourages symptoms to develop in individuals allergic to them Cat hair and dander are light

course, the nature and composition of house dust varies with its source. The contents of a vacuum cleaner container after cleaning a wool rug may be much different from that where Persian or Oriental rugs are floor coverings Similarly, a home where feather pillows and down comforters are used will yield a different dust than where these items have been eliminated For that reason, it is sometimes necessary to secure a sample of house dust from its source and have manufactured a so called autogenous' dust extract for testing and treatment

It is clear that house dust is not a specific unitarian allergen, but, rather, is a combination of wool or other elements from the rugs, cotton or kapok from the mattresses mixed feathers from pillows, animal hair, pollen of house plants, pyrethrum sprayed into the air for the control of insects, molds, and in fact, anything floating in the air of an average household Because of this mixture, the question has been raised Is this an allergy to house dust, or is it an allergy to one or more of its constituents? In a series of experiments, it has been found that, when house dust is separated into its individual composite parts patients may not react to them yet, they still will react to house dust as a whole Therefore, most allergists believe that allergy to house dust is specific and need not necessarily accompany allergy to cotton, animal hair, feathers or any other constituent of the mixture Actually, this is not important except for one factor, namely, the possibility of a nonspecific irritant factor existing in the house dust mixture which produces the positive skin test reaction and thus may be misinterpreted as an allergic reaction For this reason, it is advisable to disregard mild reactions to house dust antigen and to consider as important only the marked reactions In this manner one may avoid misinterpreting a primary irritant reaction An efficient house dust antigen is one which will produce positive reactions in house dust sensitive pa

Many patients recognize that when they are fatigued their symptoms are more severe Also the symptoms are exaggerated by irritation of the nasal passages by the odor of fresh paint tobacco or wood smoke and the fumes from the gasoline exhausts of automobiles Hay fever patients may be affected adversely by cool and damp night air Some patients find their symptoms are worse when they are lying down others when engaged in physical exercise some patients symptoms are aggravated when eating very hot foods others when drinking iced beverages There is nothing constant about any of this the stimulus is nonspecific

In the eastern portions of the United States allergists have been impressed with the frequent statement of patients that their hay fever followed nasal or sinus surgery Evidentally traumatization of the nasal and sinus membrane is a factor either in initiating hay fever or provoking an earlier appearance of the disease than would otherwise occur Patients with marked nasal obstruction from a deviated nasal septum or enlarged turbinates ordinarily suffer more than those whose nasal passages are not so obstructed

In persons with severe hay fever the shock tissue is not always limited to the mucous membrane of the eyes nose and throat but involves the bronchial mucous membrane as well In such instances asthmatic symptoms appear at the height of the pollinating season or just following the season Such cases are seen everywhere but are commonest in localities where there is an unusual amount of profuse perennial vegetation and where there are strong shifting winds *Vallejo California* is an example of such a locality where eighty per cent of the hay fever patients have asthmatic symptoms at the height of the grass pollinating season

Until comparatively recently hay fever was considered to be an *annoying* but trivial disease This is not true for it is often completely disabling and even when only partially disabling it deters an individual from doing his

centage of cases will control the disease and reduce the acute paroxysms to a minimum. With the advent of newer and more specific drugs in addition to more skillful recognition, management, and cooperation of the patient, the percentage of relief from asthma is improving. The earlier in life it is discovered and the shorter the duration of the disease, the better the results. In older individuals, complications tend to make the results less promising, but even so, the number of chronic asthmatics who are progressively improving is gratifying. Although death in asthma may occur, it is rare. When it does occur, it is usually due to some complication.

ALLERGIC RHINITIS

SEASONAL TYPE (Hay Fever, Pollinosis, Rose Fever):

Hay fever is a disease, the symptoms of which are readily apparent. The eyes are red and swollen, they itch and water. Paroxysms of sneezing occur, between which a constant rhinorrhea or nasal congestion, due to edema and accumulation of nasal secretion, occurs. Itching at the tip of the nose provokes the patient to rub it, making it red and sore. In some cases, there is intense itching of the external auditory canal, the throat, and soft palate.

Symptoms vary in degree with each individual affected. They also vary during the course of the day. For example, one patient may have his worst trouble resting at home at night, another at work during the day; constant rhinorrhea or paroxysms of sneezing may trouble a certain patient in the morning upon awakening and then as the day wears on, abate entirely, recurring again at night.

Many factors influence the fluctuation of symptoms, among these are variation in the hourly amount of pollen in the air, from one area to another, the velocity and direction of the wind, confinement indoors, or work out of doors.

Nearly everything in the air has been indicted as a cause of perennial allergic rhinitis, as, for example, butterfly scales, sandflies and the common house fly. Some cases have been ascribed to sensitivity to human hair and human dander. By far the commonest sensitivity is to house dust It often takes great perseverance, ingenuity, and dexterity to identify the etiological agent In all probability, the most important asset in arriving at an etiological clue is a carefully and pains takingly obtained history, gathering into the history everything the patient does during the course of the day, what he comes in contact with, and a list of the foods he eats Occasionally, the condition can be ascribed to inhalation of strong odors from chemical substances, such as paints and varnishes insect sprays for rosebushes and fruit trees, perfumes and scents of cologne, the odor of camphor from moth balls and flakes Among housewives, contact with soap powders or detergents should be investigated In daily life, there are so many contactants it is futile to attempt to list them The interested physician must use his own detective powers

It is possible, at times to confuse the perennial type of allergic rhinitis with constantly recurring bacterial infections of the nose or sinuses The purulent or mucopurulent character of the nasal or sinus discharge with its preponderance of polymorphonuclear leukocytes, the presence of fever, and the intercurrent aspect of a recurrent infective process help relieve any temporary obscurity that occasionally exists

PERENNIAL TYPE (Vasomotor Rhinitis, Hyperesthetic Rhinitis, Perennial Hay Fever):

Like the seasonal type of allergic rhinitis, the perennial type is known by many names Although *vasomotor rhinitis* and *perennial hay fever* are terms frequently used, the term *perennial allergic rhinitis* is preferred Vasomotor rhinitis is merely a physiological descriptive term On the whole, the symptoms and signs are similar to those of seasonal hay fever but instead of being confined to one time of the year, they persist throughout the entire twelve months Furthermore, whereas the cause of seasonal allergic rhinitis is predominantly pollen sensitivity, the etiology of the perennial type is frequently more obscure

As in the seasonal type, the degree and severity of symptoms vary In some patients, sneezing is the main symptom, in others, there is pronounced rhinorrhea In still other patients, the chief complaint is nasal obstruction The eyes do not appear to be affected as often as in the seasonal type Edema of the nasal mucous membrance and enlargement or polyps of the turbinates sometimes become so marked as to close completely the nasal fossae In these cases, a postnasal drip and frontal headache are common The appearance of the nasal mucous membrane coincides with that seen in seasonal hay fever unless secondary infection is present, when the usual pinkish gray membrane becomes a beef red The secretion, too, is like that observed in the seasonal type of hay fever, thin and watery However, as the condition continues, the secretion tends to become mucoid in type and the eosinophils become less numerous Nasal polyps are the chief complication and these are more frequent in perennial hay fever than in the seasonal variety

In warmer sections of the country where pollination is almost continuous, perennial hay fever may be due principally to pollen however, the etiology is seldom so simple

Nearly everything in the air has been indicted as a cause of perennial allergic rhinitis as for example butterfly scales sandflies and the common house fly Some cases have been ascribed to sensitivity to human hair and human dander By far the commonest sensitivity is to house dust It often takes great perseverance ingenuity, and dexterity to identify the etiological agent In all probability the most important asset in arriving at an etiological clue is a carefully and pains takingly obtained history, gathering into the history every thing the patient does during the course of the day, what he comes in contact with and a list of the foods he eats Occasionally the condition can be ascribed to inhalation of strong odors from chemical substances such as paints and varnishes insect sprays for rosebushes and fruit trees, per fumes and scents of cologne the odor of camphor from moth balls and flakes Among housewives contact with soap pow ders or detergents should be investigated In daily life, there are so many contactants it is futile to attempt to list them The interested physician must use his own detective powers

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form, the lesions assume the characteristics of other chronic dermatoses with formation of papules, thickening of the skin and pigmentation The underlying histologic pattern is intercellular edema (spongiosis) in the more superficial layers of the skin

Dermatitis venenata is due to the primary and direct contact of an offending allergen with living epidermal cells The reaction is typically allergic in that it does not occur without prior sensitization Many plants, especially their oleoresins are potent sensitizers and the incidence of sensitivity to these is great Examples are the poison oak, sumac, and ivy which are almost universal sensitizers and produce, on contact typical dermatitis venenata Theoretically, any substance chemical or organic, is a potential cause of dermatitis venenata Some are more potent sensitizers than others Consequently, some occupations are more hazardous than others with respect to occupational contact dermatitis Obviously the list of allergens giving rise to dermatitis venenata, even if all were known, would be numerous beyond listing However, some of the commoner contacts are listed in Table 2

As in other forms of allergic dermatitis, the primary symptom is itching and, consequently, excoriation is common In some instances, localized contact dermatitis becomes generalized either by being transferred mechanically or through the skin lymphatics Severe constitutional reactions have been known to occur and the lesions of dermatitis venenata tend to remain long after contact with the offending allergen has ceased Since no individual is exempt from contact dermatitis, providing the offender is potent, many problems arise as the result of this type of allergy

The diagnosis of dermatitis venenata although often simple, may at times be very difficult The morphology of the lesions and the distribution and site of the rash should give the clue The history is of utmost importance It is patently impossible to test the patient with every possible

contact For that reason, one must inquire in detail the patient s occupation and exactly what he does and what he handles His hobbies and avocations, such as golf, playing a musical instrument, or collecting stamps, must be investigated

TREATMENT:

The treatment of dermatitis venenata is not difficult once the patient no longer comes in contact with the offender As a rule, the lesions tend to heal when constant contact is avoided But, in some cases, where the lesions persist they tend to initiate a chain reaction of other allergic manifestations In such instances the treatment may be prolonged

Management of dermatitis venenata includes both local and general measures Relief of itching and soothing of the lesions are paramount considerations When the condition is acute and consists of vesicles or bullae on an edematous and erythematous base, as in other similar acute inflammatory skin conditions, wet dressings of *isotonic* salt solution, aluminum acetate, or boric acid are indicated Later, a shake lotion, such as a calamine lotion, is useful The corticosteroid creams, ointments, and lotions are particularly effective at any stage The 1 0 or the 2 5 per cent hydrocortisone cream or ointments, the 0 1 per cent ointment or lotion of fluorohydrocortisone, or the 0 5 per cent prednisolone cream will often relieve itching and aid in healing the lesions

Internally, adequate doses of cortisone or hydrocortisone and its analogs will quickly relieve the severe local and constitutional symptoms of poison oak, ivy, and sumac Since this particular form of dermatitis venenata is self limiting and of short duration, there is little objection to the temporary use of these drugs

General treatment consists of sedation, when necessary, diet with elimination of stimulating foods and general rest and care Prevention of future attacks is sometimes possible

whatever cause frequently overlap, the discussion must include all types

A patient may be intolerant to a drug In that case an undesirable reaction, even one which is very common will occur in all or most people if they take enough of it This may be merely an exaggeration of the normal or expected pharmacological response *Intolerance* thus is considered to be a *quantitative* expression of the undesirable effect of a medicine For example, everybody will get ringing of the ears when they take enough quinine or will develop some cardiac palpitation when they take a sufficient amount of caffeine This is an expected pharmacological response although the medicine is not necessarily intended for that purpose However, there is a small group of people who will develop ringing of the ears after comparatively small doses of quinine, or will exhibit palpitation of the heart after one cup of coffee These people are intolerant of these drugs

Idiosyncracy, in contradistinction to intolerance, is a *qualitative* reaction to a drug or medicine There is something in the constitutional makeup of certain individuals which encourages an untoward reaction to occur whenever the drug is taken regardless of how minute the amount An example of this type of reaction is the dermatosis which results from iodides Many people can take unlimited quantities of iodides without a trace of an undesirable reaction A certain few individuals will develop typical ioddoderma from almost infinitesimal quantities these can be considered idiosyncratic

Though the difference between *idiosyncracy* and *intolerance* may be of academic interest only the same cannot be said, however, of the difference between these and the true *allergic* type of reaction The exact mechanisms of these reactions are a subject of much investigation and for the most part remain in the realm of speculation Allergy has been defined as an altered specific reaction based on an antigen

antibody mechanism Among the conditions necessary for the establishment of this mechanism are prior sensitization and a suitable period of incubation In drug allergy it is not always easy to demonstrate the antigen antibody reaction because as a rule most simple chemicals are not antigenic in themselves and need modification before becoming so consequently circulating antibodies are not always demonstrable Furthermore in drug allergy there are at least three types of allergic reactions involved—(1) the immediate (2) the delayed and (3) the serum sickness type of reaction

In these days of many proprietory medicines and multiple compound drugs the question of prior sensitization and time element is very difficult to evaluate It is usually impossible to state without equivocation that an individual has never been in contact with one or another suspected drug Penicillin sensitivity for instance is common For example questions have been raised regarding the sensitizing power of penicillin treated vaccines for bacteriostasis and that of the milk of penicillin fed cows Reactions to penicillin administered in this fashion have already been witnessed even though it was in a minute amount It therefore is true that many individuals are being sensitized to penicillin by various methods unwittingly

There is still another type of undesired or untoward reaction to drugs This is an expected side effect and non therapeutic reaction which occurs in all cases when the drug is administered It is termed a *pharmacological reaction* and unlike *intolerance* or *idiosyncracy* it occurs in all people An example of a pharmacological drug reaction is the headache which occurs from vasodilators used for angina pectoris another example is the use of dyes which discolor the urine while acting as a urinary antiseptic or quinacrine another dye which discolors the skin while relieving the symptoms of malaria

CHAPTER 12

The Detection and Management of Food Allergy

There is considerable controversy among allergists with regard to the frequency of food allergy Some allergists feel that it occurs frequently and is the prime cause of much allergic symptomatology others insist that it is negligible However there is no question that allergy to food definitely exists It has been indicated that food allergy skin tests are not without their shortcomings All too often a patient will give a four plus skin reaction to a food he has never eaten On the other hand it is similarly a common experience to obtain a negative skin reaction to a food to which the patient gives a positive clinical history There are several possible explanations for this Age and potency of the testing material is of course a factor in every type of skin testing and in the case of food testing may account for some inconsistent reactions Sometimes a negative food skin test is due to a temporary refractory condition of the skin As an individual grows older it has been found that the skin loses some of its power of reactivity and allergy food skin tests therefore in an older person are less likely to be positive than in a young person It is altogether probable that most instances of negative food skin tests in patients who give a positive clinical history of definite food sensitivity are due to the fact that the individual is sensitive to one of the products of the digestion of the food rather than to the whole food One factor in producing false food positive tests

TABLE 9

FOODS AND FOOD PRODUCTS CONTAINING MILK

Milk products include condensed, dried, and evaporated milks, casein and lactalbumin, curds and wheys, malted and powdered milks; all cheeses.

Soups	Any canned, or dehydrated soup containing milk or milk products (Read labels)
Meat Poultry Fish	All meats, poultry or fish prepared with milk or dairy products Commercially prepared meats (Read labels)
Vegetables	Any creamed or scalloped vegetable made with milk or milk products (Read labels)
Breads	All breads, biscuits, muffins rolls, etc unless made at home without the use of milk or milk products Prepared mixes for biscuits doughnuts, muffins, pancakes, popovers and waffles (Read labels)
Desserts	Bavarian cream, blanc manges cakes cookies, custards, ice creams and sherbets pies unless made at home *without use of milk or milk products* Prepared mixes containing milk or milk products puddings
Beverages	Any beverage containing milk or milk products
Miscellaneous Foods	*Buttermilk, butters, cheeses cultured milks* Any salad dressing, sauce or gravy containing milk or milk products, butter sauces, hard sauce, cream sauce and white sauce

TABLE 10

COMMON FOODS AND FOOD PRODUCTS CONTAINING EGG

Soups	Alphabet and egg noodle soups mock turtle soup Bouillons broths consommes cleared with albumen in eggs (Read labels)
Meats Poultry Fish	Croquettes loaves patties sausages and meats poultry or fish prepared with eggs
Vegetables	Any vegetable prepared with eggs
Breads	All breads biscuits muffins rolls etc unless made at home without eggs Prepared mixes for biscuits doughnuts muffins pan cakes popovers and waffles (Check labels for albu men dried egg or egg powder)
Desserts	Bavarian creams cakes custards doughnuts fritters macaroons, meringues pies whips ice creams and sherbets unless made at home without albumen fresh, dried or powdered eggs
Beverages	Any beverage made from fresh eggs dried eggs egg powder or egg albumen or where eggs are used to clarify beverage (such as egg white or shell in coffee) or to produce foam (such as egg in root beer to make it foam)
Miscellaneous Foods	Candies made with eggs such as divinities candies in which egg white is used to produce a glaze or luster (Read labels on wrapped commercial candies) French toast fritters timbales Prepared mixes containing albumen dried or powdered eggs (Read labels) Salad dressings (Read labels) Egg hollandaise and tartar sauces

of immediate reactions has been obtained with the polysaccharide and the nucleoprotein fractions The experience of most practitioners has been, however, that when patients exhibit this immediate type of reaction to bacteria they also have additional and usually less obscure reactions to more accessible and better understood allergens This type of *bacterial allergy of the anaphylactic type is not considered by* most to be a frequent cause of allergic diseases, nor one that is directly or significantly related to them

On the other hand, there remains a large group of allergists who believe that bacterial allergy of the tuberculin type (that is, allergy to bacteria which is manifested by the delayed inflammatory, indurated papular reaction) is directly and specifically related to the symptoms of hay fever, asthma urticaria, eczema, and other allergic manifestations Furthermore, this group notes that not infrequently the original allergy symptoms are flared up merely by the application of the skin test This is considered by them as evidence that bacterial allergy is the underlying cause in that particular case

Since there is some support for both sides of the argument, and since each practitioner appears to have a personal opinion based on his own experience, technic of skin testing preparation, and treatment with a bacterial vaccine for treatment are described There are two circumstances which many allergists accept as reasonable criteria for treatment with a bacterial vaccine One is where the anaphylactic type of allergic reactions to bacteria is the only reaction the patient exhibits the other is where a skin test with a bacterial vaccine either produces a flareup or relief of symptoms In any case, there is no conclusive evidence that this treatment is specific

SKIN TESTING WITH BACTERIAL VACCINE

It is generally agreed by most immunologists that skin tests with bacterial vaccine are not reliable and are not

selective in indicating the identity of the organism which is responsible for the allergy symptoms The recommended testing strength is the concentrated vaccine of isolated bacteria or a prepared mixture diluted ten times Usually this represents a concentration of 100 000 000 organisms per cc

An immediate reaction is considered very significant as evidence of anaphylactic allergy to the bacterial antigen A delayed reaction is considered suggestive When specific allergy symptoms flare up within twenty four to forty eight hours after the test this too is considered significant The combination of a positive delayed reaction associated with aggravation of specific allergy symptoms is often considered irrefutable evidence of a cause and effect relationship If symptoms which have been continuous are temporarily relieved within twenty four hours after the test many feel this is due to the vaccine test and indicative of the verity of bacterial allergy

PREPARATION OF A BACTERIAL VACCINE

The technics for preparing vaccine are numerous and intricate The ultimate result usually is a standardized vaccine of killed bacteria containing a suspension of the whole bacteria either washed or unwashed killed either by heat or by formalin In other technics the filtrate of the culture broth on which the bacteria were grown is used In still other vaccines the bacteria are ground up in a ball mill washed or unwashed formalized or heat killed

A popular method of preparation is to make the bacteria non viable by mechanical grinding in a ball mill then ultra filtering the mixture In this way it is claimed the bacterial antigen is natural and unchanged Another method is to use the filtrate of the broth on which the final isolated colonies are grown since it will then represent the unchanged soluble bacterial antigen Still another method is to grow the bacteria properly isolate transplant and regrow them on spe

PHYSICAL ALLERGY TO COLD

THE LOCAL TYPE:

This is commonly observed when edema of the face, the eye, the ears, or the hands results from local exposure to cold Whereas heat allergy is commoner in adults it appears that cold allergy is more frequent in children

THE GENERAL TYPE:

The following forms of generalized cold allergy have been described Urticaria, diarrhea, visual disturbances bladder irritability, hemoglobinuria, fever, nausea and vomiting, vertigo, nasal edema, edema of the glottis, arthralgia, myalgia, and shock Cryoglobinemia, the presence of abnormal proteins in the blood, which gel on cooling and redissolve on warming has been suggested as a manifestation of physical allergy due to cold It is altogether probable that some deaths from drowning may be due to shock in allergic individuals sensitive to cold

A common test for cold is to apply a test tube filled with chopped ice or ice water to the skin or immersing the hand in cold water of about 4 5° C (40° F) As in heat allergy, a positive test is shown by whealing and erythema Most patients react to cold after first being in a warm atmosphere As in other allergies the threshold to cold may be lowered by concomitant allergens, psychic influences, or intercurrent infection Treatment consists of desensitizing the patient to cold The usual way in which this is accomplished is by use of daily baths, starting with a tepid one and gradually reducing the temperature of the water and the period of immersion every day, ultimately ending with a cold bath Another method is to rub the body daily with ice or very cold wet cloths

Injections of histamine have been employed in cold allergy with varying results Treatment consists of sub

cutaneous injections of histamine twice daily for two or three weeks beginning with a very small dose and increasing gradually until beneficial results are experienced Then the intervals between doses are increased first once daily then every second day every third day *et cetera* The starting dose of histamine varies in different individuals Usually a 1 10 000 dilution of histamine phosphate is safe but occasionally it is necessary to begin with a dilution as high as 1 5 000 000 A normal histamine response is a mild headache flushing and a drop in blood pressure Exaggeration of these to intolerable proportions is considered an untoward reaction and an indication of overdosage Collapse after a histamine injection has been reported Therefore the patient should remain in the doctor s office fifteen to twenty minutes after each injection Dosage of histamine is best increased by increments of 0 05 cc until 0 6 cc of the dilution is tolerated Following this the next dose is 0 05 cc of the next stronger dilution which is ten times as strong

Individuals who are sensitive to cold will find it more comfortable to live in temperate climates where there is little fluctuation in temperatures

PHYSICAL ALLERGY TO LIGHT

THE LOCAL TYPE

This is an initial erythema followed with edema that is limited to the site of exposure Surrounding the edema a flare into the surrounding tissues develops The condition is termed *urticaria solaris* since it is due almost entirely to the ultraviolet violet indigo and blue rays of the sun Frequently several hours elapse before the onset of symptoms although they may occur immediately or *within a few* minutes after exposure

Photodermatitis resulting from the exposure of the skin

CHAPTER 16

Miscellaneous Manifestations of Allergy

Although it is true that the majority of symptoms of allergic disease originate in the respiratory tract and skin, it must be re-emphasized that the site of the antigen antibody reaction the shock tissue is not limited to these structures Theoretically, any organ or structure of the body may be the site therefore allergic reactions are manifested in such diverse anatomical structures as the central nervous system and the joints of the feet Some of these, such as the ocular system and the gastrointestinal tract, are commonly the origin of allergic disease Others such as the cardiovascular and the renal systems are rarely affected Some are controversial others are questionable However, reports of allergic disease emanating from practically every organ, structure, and system of the body have been recorded in the scientific literature

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM

HEADACHES:

The problem of headaches is a *complex one* Since an aching head is a subjective symptom and each patient's tolerance to pain varies *greatly*, it is a symptom which is often

or even be present in the back of the neck or the midline of the forehead.

The third stage, when present, is a feeling of exhaustion and, at times, sleepiness which follows the headache and occurs usually when the attack of migraine has been protracted. The exact pathology underlying this stage is not completely understood; cerebral edema is thought to be an underlying factor.

The majority of patients with migraine give a family history of similar attacks in their antecedents. Undoubtedly, in some cases, there is a hormonal influence since the headaches are often associated with the menses. An emotional factor is undeniably present in many cases. Whether this is a primary cause or whether it acts merely as a trigger mechanism is subject to controversy. Unquestionably, allergy is an underlying mechanism in certain cases. This has been proven by reports of symptomatic relief following avoidance of a particular food, of the initiation of an attack following contact with a pertinent allergen, the association with other evidence of allergic disease, and the finding of eosinophilia. Nevertheless, in the opinion of most observers, allergy as a specific cause of migraine is not common.

The treatment of migraine is not always satisfactory. If the patient is seen during the prodromal or vasoconstrictive stage, the prompt use of a potent vasodilator, such as nicotinic acid orally in doses of 100 to 200 milligrams, may prove effective. Once the headache has begun, vasodilators are contraindicated and vasoconstrictors are indicated. Many are available, the most popular of which are compounds of ergotamine tartrate with or without caffeine. These may be effective, but unfortunately in many cases, they are useless. The dangers of using ergot preparations are well known. Patients with peripheral vascular disease, hypertension and coronary disease must be guarded against the indiscriminate use of such drugs. When attacks are infrequent, codeine and

other narcotic analgesics are often used Aspirin may be equally effective

Histamine Cephalalgia

This condition was first described by Horton of the Mayo Clinic who made the distinction between histamine headache and histamine cephalalgia *Histamine headache* is the normal full feeling in the head which normal people will experience after an injection of histamine or for that matter after any potent vasodilator such as nicotinic acid or nitroglycerin *Histamine cephalalgia* according to Horton is a distinct entity which occurs in some people without the administration of histamine The attacks are of short duration and last from a few minutes to an hour but may recur several times during the day The excruciating headache is usually unilateral and is described as burning boring and pounding it usually starts and terminates abruptly Characteristically there is a watering of the eye and rhinorrhea on the same side as the ache often profuse perspiration is associated with it The attack can usually be precipitated by a subcutaneous injection of an adequate dose of histamine On receiving this injection the patient will first experience the expected dull vasodilating headache Eventually he will experience the typical syndrome with which he is familiar For rapid relief of this experimental headache Horton recommends intravenous dihydroergotamine methanesulfonate (DHE 45) Usually however this short lasting headache does not require immediate relief

The treatment of histamine cephalalgia currently used is to inject increasingly larger doses of histamine up to the point of tolerance The initial dilution to be used should not be greater than 1 10 000 solution of histamine phosphate It may be necessary to begin with a much higher dilution Starting with 0 05 cc of the chosen dilution a subcutaneous injection is given twice daily increasing in

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and Pierre, with Renée at his heels, for the vineyard, to work the heavy clots of earth caused by the unshoeing of the vines Madame Vincent, driving up in a red-wheeled tilbury, with her elder son, Victor, at her side, came upon Pierre and beckoned him away from his labourers "What now?" she said, for she was puzzled and, in spite of herself, a little impressed by what she had seen through the barred window and the curtain chinks of the parlour If there had not been early work to do in her own home, she would have waited last night for Barbet's return from the courtyard, she had left in a torment of curiosity "What happened after I had gone?" she demanded

"How should I know?" Pierre grumbled "It was I drove you home When I came back, the prisoners were in their cells That's all I know And now the old girl says it was a miracle"

Renée's quicker tongue told the story, to which Madame Vincent gave an attention graver than they had expected of her

"So!" she said, when the tale was done "And what does Barbet say? Does he believe it?" Then, rousing herself, she threw off superstition "Or is it only that fool mother of his?"

"Well," Pierre admitted, "he has said nothing about it He just gave her a second cup of coffee and went off to Roussignac"

"Then how does he account for what happened?"

"He doesn't"

"That is ridiculous He must be made to account for it Isn't that so, Victor? You are a man of the world"

"Yes, mamma, certainly, but all the same—"

"What?"

"I am not sure in what way it concerns us"

"That Pierre should marry into a blasphemous family and the whole country laugh at him! Doesn't that concern us?"

"Oh, certainly it does But I am not yet sure what use to make of it"

Victor considered this problem carefully, stroking flies off the pony's flank with the lash of his whip He was smaller and narrower than Pierre, very dark, with a sharp nose, bright brown eyes, and an

air of being town bred and dapper If chance had not made him Anton s partner, he might have been a banker or a sceptical priest His special gift was to treat his mother with an extreme formal deference, which led her to believe that she ruled him as she ruled Pierre and Bette, while going his own pernickety way in spite of her

'You see, mamma," he said with that flicker of his brown eyes which served him for a smile, "we must learn of the philosophers," and he waited the effect of his remark with the curious interest of a doctor who has administered an emetic

For a moment Madame Vincent was at a loss "Learn of the philosophers' she repeated Then almost with passion her memory gave up its dead "'Learn of the philosophers,' said the Count de Gabalis, 'always to look for natural causes in all extraordinary happenings and when there is none, fall back on God'"

'Precisely, mamma," said Victor "If Barbet did not perform a miracle, nothing unusual has happened, if he did, what blasphemy do you complain of?'

'Enough! Enough!' Madame Vincent exclaimed, seizing the reins from him I never heard such nonsense Is this France? Is it the nineteenth century? A miracle, indeed!"

Still it would be annoying mamma to be among those who failed to recognize a miracle before their eyes There have been so many in history They are always the fools of the legend"

Madame Vincent knew he was laughing at her, but with which side of his mouth how could she tell?—for he was a trimmer, and could not himself have told There was nothing to be done with Victor except shout him down

"There is no such thing as a miracle," she said, "and if there were, it s nothing to boast about in one s own home. Have you ever heard of a saint who didn t get his family into trouble?' and, as a mark of her disapproval she left Victor outside while she called upon Madame Hazard He strolled back to the vineyard, and infuriated Pierre by paying elaborate compliments to Renee, though he had no interest in her or in any woman

The two mothers meanwhile seated themselves face to face at the

parlour table An épergne, empty of flowers, intervened It stood on a mat of crocheted silk Madame Vincent twisted the tassels

"And now, my dear Chouquette, what is this I hear? You have changed your tune since last night"

Madame Hazard was aware of this and deeply embarrassed by it, for consistency was to her a supreme virtue "What I have said I have said," was among her favourite expressions, and there was now no denying that, last night, she had called Barbet a rascal, and, in the morning, a—but had she used the word "saint"? Certainly not What the others might have understood was their concern, what she herself might, in a rash moment, have felt was her own, if she had not spoken the word "saint," she might still wriggle

"Listen," Madame Vincent continued, 'listen, Chouquette, and tell me what it is you say now Did your Barbet put the prisoners to bed by force?"

"No"

"Did he command them?"

"No"

"Did he call upon Pierre for assistance?'

"Dieu Jésus—non! That he did not!'

"Then," said Madame Vincent, looking around the cherubs of the épergne with the triumph of an advocate who has cornered his witness, "does it not follow that he put them to bed with the help of God?"

But Madame Hazard smiled as she did when her opponent played a wrong card at piquet

"Is there anything, dear Emilie, that we do without his help?'

'That," cried Madame Vincent, springing to battle, is cant and hypocrisy You know perfectly well that there is a difference between the things one can reasonably expect of God and the things one can't"

"Oh dear, oh dear," Madame Hazard exclaimed, suddenly cackling with merriment

"'If the cherries in your hat
Jump about like that'

we shall have no need, my friend, to put flowers into the bowl of the épergne."

She closed her eyes, put her hands on her hips and began to shake with the laughter of the frivolous minx who inhabited her

And this is the moment you choose to quote a patter of the music-halls! she heard Madame Vincent cry in indignation 'A lewd patter, too if you went further with it—as well you know! I can see nothing to laugh at!'

"No, Emilie, you seldom can. That is one of the things one can't reasonably expect of God"

'You, a relapsed Catholic," Madame Vincent retorted, "—I am astonished that you believe in saints"

This was too much Tears started to Madame Hazard's eyes Being of that frail nature which enchants men by its variable ease but being also a woman who hoped intuitively that in a predominantly masculine heaven a place would somehow be found for her, she always paid for her moments of irresponsibility with moments of panic In her girlhood, she would go in icy dread from her naughtiness to the priest only to look out from under a repentant bonnet on her way home and run hot foot from the priest to her naughtiness and though she could not help mocking her stern neighbour now and then she had a feeling of almost superstitious reverence for Madame Vincent because poor thing she was, and had always been so ugly because whenever you giggled, she looked at you over her great nose like a large and reproachful mare It brought Madame Hazard to her senses to discover, when she opened her eyes that the épergne her bulwark, had been removed to the end of the table and that she was looking straight into the long brown face It was like waking in a meadow to find oneself being snuffed by a cart horse

Forgive me she said hoping the face would relax, and wishing, in another corner of her mind that she was young enough to jump up and dance round the table "forgive me, Emilie Let us talk of this as friends.

The face did not relax.

"Very well," said Madame Vincent, and, having made sure, with a modest glance, that there were no men in the room, she sat back from the table and crossed her legs

And now, because she had been frightened, because she was hard-pressed, above all because she had made a fool of herself, Madame Hazard knew what she must do If she gave signs of retreat, Emilie would pursue and trample her At all costs she must attack

"Listen," she began demurely, pulling the crocheted mat towards her and smoothing it with her little hands, "I will confess to you that I am troubled in my own mind I am not as learned as you are" She looked through her eyelashes to mark the effect of this and, judging it to be satisfactory, continued "I have not the advantage of your reading Sometimes, as you have told me, I flutter like a moth It would help me, my dear, if you would answer a few questions"

"Certainly I will answer," said Madame Vincent

"Then, first, I will ask you this Did Barbet put the prisoners to bed by force?"

"No"

"Did he command them?"

Madame Vincent moved suspiciously, hearing her own questions return to her, but she answered firmly "No, Chouquette"

"Did he call upon Pierre for assistance?"

"No, but—"

"And the prisoners were fierce?"

"Indeed"

"Rebellious? Defiant? Murderous?"

"Indeed! Indeed!"

"Then can you suggest, Emilie, any natural reason for their sitting on the ground to study glow worms? Can you tell me, in a few clear words, in what way this story differs from that of Daniel in the lions' den?" And suddenly, while asking this question of Madame Vincent, Madame Hazard asked it of herself and could find no answer Her heart beat faster, a thrill of wonder ran up her spine to the roots of her hair, she saw before her, in imagination, the tranquillity of those men who had fallen upon their knees with

her son in the moonlit courtyard It was glow worms, not prayer, that had brought them down—still, upon their knees they had fallen, and she saw again that crouching group and remembered the long silence that had followed and, when she had thrown up the window, the distinct murmur of Barbet's voice Now she was passed beyond the persuasion of Madame Vincent and all fear of her She was possessed by the assurance of wonder, as she had been when she had emptied her first cup of coffee, and the assurance transformed her

"Can it be," cried Madame Vincent, "that you believe this thing?"

"Can you" Madame Hazard demanded, "look me in the face and doubt it?"

"In five minutes," said Madame Vincent, with more gentleness than was usual in her, "you won't believe it yourself, *my poor Chouquette*"

"But you will—*you* will—though you are too stiff necked to admit it"

Madame Vincent did not deny this, but shrugged her shoulders The mother of Barbet gazed at her

"What is belief?" she asked "What is belief?" Her old face *blushed* and crumpled, as though she were a girl scolded for her love and faith With a little cry of joy, she burst into tears and trotted out of the room

Madame Vincent arranged the crocheted mat in the centre of the table and returned the épergne to its place She would have liked to have done more for Chouquette, but did not know how, so she went into the vineyard and bullied Pierre because she loved him and because he could not perform miracles.

Chapter 6

IN MADAME HAZARD'S FANTASTIC BELIEF THAT HER son had worked a miracle and in the incident from which that belief had sprung, Victor saw the opportunity he had long been seeking to drive Barbet from his home.

In 1876, when Julien Hazard died, though the phylloxera was known, it was not a present menace to the district of Cognac. The Maison Hazard, its farm, its vineyards and its reserves of brandy, were believed to be worth two hundred thousand francs, though their admitted value was less. Barbet had accepted them as his share of the inheritance, and at his father's wish, so that the family property should not be divided, had joined Anton in an agreement, annually renewable, by which Barbet, if at any time in the following year he decided to sell, would give Anton a first option to buy at a price stated in the agreement. Since then, because wine for distillation and cognac for blending had been made rare by the disease of the vines, Barbet's property, seemingly exempt from the phylloxera, had increased in value. Each year he renewed the agreement without raising the figure above the hundred and sixty thousand francs suggested by their father as a fair price between brother and brother, but nothing would persuade him to sell. To compel him to do so, to win profit for Anton and commission for himself, was Victor's purpose.

He had a genius for suspicion, an invincible assurance of human baseness. Making it his art to know what each man and woman lusted after or feared, he was a collector and connoisseur of secrets, the more successful because he was an honest blackmailer who never blabbed without reason and did indeed give silence in return for his price. These qualities had enabled him to establish, in Roussignac

and the district surrounding it, a network of petty powers, he knew the infidelities of wives, the dishonesties of clerks, even the agonized shames of children, and traded in them as only a man can in whom avarice is the least of his vices. He valued money, not as a miser does or for what it could buy, but as evidence of his triumph and of others' submission to him. To extract payment from a frightened woman gave him the pleasure that a snob might have in a new decoration or a pedant in a new degree, it was useless, but a feather in his cap, a title to self-esteem, and self esteem was necessary to him as a narcotic to his self hatred

To this entanglement of obscure pressures and secret commissions he gave a name. He called the thing his system—'le systeme Vincent'—and ruled his secret empire with the pride of a Talleyrand, keeping a journal which, when posterity discovered it, should earn for him the immortality of a Fouche But he had not Fouché's restraint The greatest intriguers are they who remain unknown The rest grow weary of the very secrecy on which their intrigue depends, they crave for that recognition which is, in its nature, fatal to them, and Victor hated Barbet because he was unresponsive to his malice, deaf to his schemes, behaving in all things as if le système Vincent did not exist

Victor had material reasons also for wishing to force Barbet to sell the Maison Hazard Anton desired it to appease his hunger for property his wife, Bette, to crown her prestige as queen of Roussignac From so large a transaction there would be rich pickings for its negotiator and Victor laid his plans carefully For more than a fortnight he exploited his system in a series of visits, of casual meetings [illegible]
To o [illegible]
as m [illegible] ous women as intolerable arrogance. To some he represented it as Barbet's own claim adding that the little man had become impious and intolerable, that he "heard voices" and "had chats with angels," that he combined fantastic assertions of holiness with secret debaucheries at the Cheval Pie. It was not easy to stir up opinion against Barbet personally, he was loved, and even those who considered him extremely odd were more inclined to smile at than to

condemn him; but when Victor hit upon the device of linking the names of Barbet and Thérèse, he found that his course was clear. The sour, the disappointed and the repressed among the women of Roussignac loathed "the tart from Angoulême"; the good wives distrusted her. Victor told how she had followed Barbet into the woods by night, how she had borrowed and was even now using his mandolin, and how Frédéric had said— The gossips of Roussignac lent ear, and the way was prepared for Victor to call upon his sister one morning in her grand house with gargoyles behind the Lion Rouge.

Bette, a woman with high, ruddy cheeks and yellow hair which grew so far back on her forehead that she seemed to be wearing a slipped wig, received her brother as a monarch might receive the head of her secret police—that is, with patronage and fear, an elaborate mingling of affability with dislike; at which he smiled thinly, seated in a gilded chair, inhaling the smells of camphor, beeswax and lace curtains that were her drawing-room.

She began at once to chatter, eager to know but afraid to hear why Victor had come. Two years ago, she had gone for a walk in the woods with Henri Flornoy, the doctor—he whose father had gone for a walk with a tiger. They had rested in a deserted hut, and Henri had begun to tell her what happiness it was for him to find, in so dull a place as Roussignac, a woman of high intelligence and sympathy, in whose company he felt himself to be always at ease. "Then shall we sit down?" she had said, for Henri was sentimental and might have talked standing for an hour. They were seated on the ground together, he admiring the peculiar expressiveness of her hands, when Victor walked in. Afterwards, she had explained everything to Victor. Whether he believed her or not, she did not know. Certainly he had said nothing to Anton, which, at the time, had surprised her; but he had not ceased, whenever they met, to remind her of his knowledge. He did not threaten; he made no direct statement of any kind; but sometimes he would speak of woodland walks, sometimes of the danger of women falling in love with men younger than themselves, and sometimes, in the company of others, just when she was a little boastful, a little gay, perhaps a little neglectful of him,

he would take her hands and bow over them and declare that in all his life he had not seen hands as expressive as hers. Flornoy's name was not mentioned. Victor would speak mysteriously of the Count Fersen, and Bette had had to go to her books before she discovered that Fersen had been doubtfully spoken of as the lover of Marie Antoinette. Now the reference was clearly understood between them. Bette did her utmost to pretend that it was a good humoured joke.

"And how, dear sister, is the Count Fersen?"

"Victor, how foolish you are! There was never anything in that."

"That is why I speak of the Count Ferson. No one but Marie Antoinette herself will ever be sure."

It was said with a dip of his empty glass that was almost an obeisance. Bette's nostrils flickered. A likening of herself to that unfortunate queen pleased her in spite of the context, and she begged him to take another drop from the decanter beside his chair. First he filled her glass, then his own.

'I have a suggestion to make to you,' he said, but it was long before he made it. Once her curiosity was roused and her fear awakened she became voluble, and Victor had only to be patient; her knowledge would be poured out, relevant or seemingly irrelevant; it was all grist to his mill; he stored it in his orderly memory until its use should appear. Though she was a fool when he played her and had the weakness of supposing herself to be astute, she was by no means valueless to him, for she knew how to play others—young Flornoy for example—and had a judgment not sapped by pity. She might or might not have employed the man for her pleasure. Victor did not care so long as she was able and willing to use him for their common advantage. Though carnal desire had no meaning for him personally, he accepted it in others as a fact; it was no bar to his alliance as long as it was uncorrupted by romance. Being himself unfruitful not by physical defect but by that avarice of spirit which turns lust inward upon itself, he was disgusted by all things generous and naturally productive.

Even Bette he had avoided when she was pregnant and nursing. He could not endure the sweet, mealy smell of babies or the sound of their gums at the breast. To account for this in himself he

condemn him; but when Victor hit upon the device of linking the names of Barbet and Thérèse, he found that his course was clear. The sour, the disappointed and the repressed among the women of Roussignac loathed "the tart from Angoulême"; the good wives distrusted her. Victor told how she had followed Barbet into the woods by night, how she had borrowed and was even now using his mandolin, and how Frédéric had said— The gossips of Roussignac lent ear, and the way was prepared for Victor to call upon his sister one morning in her grand house with gargoyles behind the Lion Rouge.

Bette, a woman with high, ruddy cheeks and yellow hair which grew so far back on her forehead that she seemed to be wearing a slipped wig, received her brother as a monarch might receive the head of her secret police—that is, with patronage and fear, an elaborate mingling of affability with dislike, at which he smiled thinly, seated in a gilded chair, inhaling the smells of camphor, beeswax and lace curtains that were her drawing-room

She began at once to chatter, eager to know but afraid to hear why Victor had come Two years ago, she had gone for a walk in the woods with Henri Flornoy, the doctor—he whose father had gone for a walk with a tiger They had rested in a deserted hut, and Henri had begun to tell her what happiness it was for him to find, in so dull a place as Roussignac, a woman of high intelligence and sympathy, in whose company he felt himself to be always at ease. "Then shall we sit down?" she had said, for Henri was sentimental and might have talked standing for an hour They were seated on the ground together, he admiring the peculiar expressiveness of her hands, when Victor walked in Afterwards, she had explained everything to Victor. Whether he believed her or not, she did not know. Certainly he had said nothing to Anton, which, at the time, had surprised her, but he had not ceased, whenever they met, to remind her of his knowledge He did not threaten, he made no direct statement of any kind, but sometimes he would speak of woodland walks, sometimes of the danger of women falling in love with men younger than themselves, and sometimes, in the company of others, just when she was a little boastful, a little gay, perhaps a little neglectful of him,

he would take her hands and bow over them and declare that in all his life he had not seen hands as expressive as hers Flornoy's name was not mentioned Victor would speak mysteriously of the Count Fersen, and Bette had had to go to her books before she discovered that Fersen had been doubtfully spoken of as the lover of Marie Antoinette Now the reference was clearly understood between them Bette did her utmost to pretend that it was a good humoured joke.

"And how, dear sister, is the Count Fersen?'

'Victor, how foolish you are! There was never anything in that."

"That is why I speak of the Count Ferson. No one but Marie Antoinette herself will ever be sure"

It was said with a dip of his empty glass that was almost an obeisance. Bette's nostrils flickered A likening of herself to that unfortunate queen pleased her in spite of the context, and she begged him to take another drop from the decanter beside his chair First he filled her glass, then his own

'I have a suggestion to make to you" he said, but it was long before he made it Once her curiosity was roused and her fear awakened she became voluble, and Victor had only to be patient, her knowledge would be poured out relevant or seemingly irrelevant it was all grist to his mill, he stored it in his orderly memory until its use should appear Though she was a fool when he played her, and had the weakness of supposing herself to be astute, she was by no means valueless to him, for she knew how to play others—young Flornoy for example—and had a judgment not sapped by pity She might or might not have employed the man for her pleasure Victor did not care so long as she was able and willing to use him for their common advantage Though carnal desire had no meaning for him personally, he accepted it in others as a fact, it was no bar to his alliance as long as it was uncorrupted by romance Being himself unfruitful not by physical defect but by that avarice of spirit which turns lust inward upon itself, he was disgusted by all things generous and naturally productive

Even Bette he had avoided when she was pregnant and nursing He could not endure the sweet, mealy smell of babies or the sound of their gums at the breast To account for this in himself he

had woven a philosophy of frustration into the pattern of his life All faith was hypocrisy, all achievement contemptible Any man who succeeded and any woman who loved became a target for his enmity He loathed the prolific When his mother spoke of Hugo or Balzac, he said they "spawned" He was afraid of the sea, even of the lake—they were too large, but he kept goldfish in a bowl and tickled them with the back of his finger nail His political opinions were governed by dislike of those in whom he perceived the lie of idealism, and nothing gave him more pleasure than to sterilize aspiration by ridicule Even his feet were consistent with his theory, there was no spring in them, they did not stride, but picked their way, each step an avoidance, and whichever of them was in air when he crossed his legs drooped like the tail of a limp cod overhanging a fishmonger's slab While his sister talked he stroked the dusty upper of his boot, designing a little pattern upon it

She knew what he was waiting for and allowed him to wait, telling him of all the other inhabitants of Roussignac but saying no word of Barbet or Thérese At last she said that on Friday, while she was checking the cash book, Therese had come into the store

"For what?

"Underclothes"

Victor asked for details—their price shape colour With frills or without? Bette answered him unsmiling as though she were stock taking She understood perfectly that if one intended to have power over a woman, all information concerning her was of value

"I think," said Victor after an impressive pause I see at last a way to your becoming mistress of the Maison Hazard

She sighed 'Barbet will never sell

"I think in the end he will said Victor and he explained to her again, with new and persuasive detail how he had worked upon opinion in Roussignac It was beginning to be said that Madame Hazard was mad, soon Barbet himself would be included in the charge, already there were boys who cried out Saint! Saint! as he passed and laughed at him

'Victor," said Bette, if you think you are going to drive out Barbet by ridicule, you have mistaken your man'

Her brother was for a moment taken aback "You think so? Perhaps you are right But if his mother is ridiculed? If Thérèse Despreux is persecuted because of him? If the story of that prison revolt grows and grows until he himself begins to wonder whether he is not unfitted to look after prisoners? Listen, Bette," he continued, leaning forward and touching her knee, "you must give me credit for not being a fool"

If she had dared, Bette would have shrugged her shoulders Instead she leaned back on the sofa, allowing her chin to sink until she could feel under it the beads she was wearing

"You know," she said, "Anton doesn't despise Barbet."

"What do you mean?'

"Anton dislikes him Anton can't make head or tail of him any more than we can They're as far apart as it's possible for two men to be—but Anton doesn't despise him"

Victor curbed his impatience. "Still I don't understand what you mean'

"Only that I think we should be wrong to under estimate him. I don't believe he can be threatened or bribed"

"Who has spoken of threats or bribes? But we can induce him"

Bette lifted her head "Can we? How?"

' By combining the two purposes—the Cheval Pie and the Maison Hazard Have you spoken to Anton again about his buying the Cheval Pie?"

' I have. He grinned."

"Well?'

' Oh, I *don't* say he's against it. He's always willing to buy local property at a price."

' But does he not see that the Cheval Pie will become a dangerous rival to the Lion Rouge—*more* and more dangerous as long as the girl is there?'

' The girl," Bette repeated "So we come back to her"

Victor had other motives than his desire to turn out Thérèse, but he was willing that, for the time being, his sister should concentrate upon it He had already interested his friend Georges Hurtaux of Angoulême in the widow Sernet's property, he would bid up Hur-

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taux against Anton while appearing to act as buying agent for each, he would take commission from whichever would pay the more and, as selling agent, commission from the widow Sernet as well As for the Maison Hazard, the difficulties were greater but not insuperable The price was fixed, the conditions were agreed in detail, nothing was needed but Barbet's consent to sell, and Victor had decided that this consent could be obtained from Barbet, if not by threat or appeal to avarice, then by working on his conscience

"I think," Victor said, "you understand me very little, Bette It is true, I wish to be rid of the girl, but there is a connexion between the two projects"

"Between the Cheval Pie and the Maison Hazard?"

"Certainly drive out the girl, the man will follow"

She was incredulous "Barbet? Therèse Despreux? You believe that?"

"Who knows? Men of his sort are often trapped by extremely animal women"

"But she—why should she look at him?"

"Because, my dear Bette, he would be a new experience for her Gluttons like a new dish That in the first place, and afterwards—well, she would discover that he was kind to her" The tension of an extraordinary malice drew his eyelids together and he said "The great whores have always lighted candles to the saints not for the forgiveness but for the understanding of sin"

Bette regarded her brother with bewilderment His meanness she knew, his cleverness she knew, his limitations as an intriguer she vaguely apprehended She feared, admired and despised him—admired his persistence, his memory, his unswerving materialism, while despising the pettiness of the man and the absurd pretensions of his system It had amused her a little, though she wanted the Maison Hazard if she could get it, to think that, in attacking Barbet, her brother would find himself out of his depth She disliked Barbet because so evidently his life rested upon values that she did not understand, but she respected him, as Anton did, because there was something formidable and, above all, unaccountable in his 'fanaticism"

Now she perceived for the first time in her life that Victor also was fanatical—something much more than a village blackmailer who gave himself the airs of a Fouché—and she was afraid with a new fear Hearing what he said of Therèse Despreux and watching his face as he spoke of the great whores that lighted their candles to the saints, she understood that power not his own, not the product of his scheming or of his conscious mind, was awake in Victor She looked at him cautiously His eyes were open again, with the little finger of his left hand, he was picking his ear, nothing in him appeared to be abnormal and she drew breath in a long sigh Then she asked him, as casually as possible, why he disliked Therese so much To her surprise, the question seemed not to exasperate him He replied in an even voice, as though he were discussing the anatomy of an animal, that the girl differed from other sensual women in this—that while they were possessive, she gave out. As he said this, his hands made an outward, flowing gesture from his body, and he asked

"Have you ever seen blood pumped from an artery?"

Bette answered 'No," but he did not hear her

'It is like that," he continued "To be near her is like being spurted with blood"

Still outwardly calm, he passed his hands over his face, wiping it, and allowed them to rest upon the arms of his chair

"That, you see, is what they have in common"

"Who?'

'Barbet Therese It gushes from them."

'What gushes from them?'

He wished to be silent, not to confess himself even to his sister She watched his lips parting and closing, and his tongue come out to wet them

'Life," he said at last, and no sooner had he said it than he began to stretch himself and smirk and jig in his chair, for fear that she might understand him too well

That morning Barbet had walked to the Lion Rouge to collect the money due to him for the upkeep of his prisoners He should have

come three days earlier and his brother shouted at him "How do you expect me to keep my accounts in order if you let things run on in this way?"

Barbet said he was sorry to have been unpunctual, took the money and signed a receipt for it

"Sit down," said Anton "I have a few words to say to you Is the door firmly shut?"

Having tried the door, Barbet seated himself opposite his brother at the varnished table Only the upper wings of the shutters had been thrown back, the floor, the table, the empty stove and a pair of riding boots drooping against the farther wall were in a half-darkness pierced by slender beams that fell through shaped apertures in the lower shutters, the body of light from the square struck across the room horizontally, and when Anton stood up, as he always did when he was about to orate, his face and shoulders were unexpectedly plunged into it, it slapped him in the eyes and he sat down again, blinking, as if he had hit his head against the ceiling

He had the gift, necessary to ambitious men if they are to pillage the world with a good conscience, of believing that he was a benefactor of the human race, particularly of the section of it that lived in Roussignac Being its benefactor, he had a right to lecture it and to expect it to respond gratefully to his enthusiasm If attendance at *the Lion Rouge or purchases at the Magasin du Lion fell off*, he was distressed by the ingratitude of his fellow citizens for was not his inn "the centre of their civic life" and his store 'organized to serve them"? In private business he was brief, shrewd and not dishonest, in private life, close but not unkind, it was only in his capacity of mayor or as head of his family that he became fuddled by a sense of righteousness "There are times," his mother had said to him when he had pointed out to her that it was her duty to persuade Barbet to sell the Maison Hazard, "there are times, dear Anton, when you behave as if God and not Victor Vincent were your go-between I will not have you talking to me as if you were a statue in the market place The old man on that pedestal was my father-in-law Sit down, for heaven's sake! Don't hold up your left hand

like a marble orator as if you expected the pigeons to anoint you"

'I am sure," Anton had replied, "that every word was spoken for your good"

"Justement," said Madame Hazard "That is what I complain of And there are too many words"

There were always too many words when Anton spoke for the good of others

'I am being reluctantly compelled to believe," he said now to Barbet, rising again from his chair and cautiously arranging himself so that the sun warmed the back of his head and threw forward deep shadows from the flesh of his jowl, "that the conduct of affairs at home is falling into a condition of—I will not say confusion but certainly of irregularity I will not conceal from you that since our last discussion of that unhappy incident "

'What unhappy incident?"

"The outbreak'

"You can call it what you like, Anton, but it wasn't unhappy"

The mayor smiled as men do when patting a dog they distrust 'I am not an intolerant man, Barbet," he continued "I hope I shall never be accused of being a worldly one, and it is my duty, as head of our family and indeed—if I may say so—as father of Roussignac, to recognize the validity of many points of view not my own I am fully aware of what you feel about the revolt, but you must allow me to insist that, from the standpoint of discipline and good government, its outcome was extremely unhappy"

'The prisoners are still there and in good order"

"So it may seem to you, but to Pierre Vincent "

"Ah" said Barbet, 'but that is because he has become afraid of them—and afraid of me. You see, he has become very confused The cure says he is like the modern world he is both superstitious and sceptical Poor Pierre! He half believes I performed a miracle and, because he will call it a miracle, he is quite sure it wouldn't work again.'

'Well, would it?' said Anton in spite of himself, his human

curiosity overcoming his knowledge that the only way to preserve official dignity in Barbet's presence was not give a chance to his unexpectedness

"*I thought you were lecturing me*?" Barbet replied

Anton drew himself up "You mistake me I may be mayor of this place—and a heavy task it is—but I am still your brother It is my duty to understand you Tell me what you believe" It was an order

"I will tell you Plainly this If I had anything I valued that Blachère could take away from me, then I might have to use pistols to protect it There's no need to use force if I haven't"

"But you have"

"What?"

"Your life Don't tell me you don't enjoy living I've never known anyone who seemed to enjoy it more—though what you get out of it puzzles me Your life was in danger"

"But then you see," said Barbet, "I don't count that as a personal possession"

The large head twisted in the sunlight After staring for a moment at his brother, Anton decided not to reply He came out from behind his table, walked with determination across the room, halted in front of a wall map of the district and said abruptly over his shoulder

"In any case, my poor Barbet, we have practical things to consider I had been about to warn you that, though you seem not to care or not to have noticed it, this unhappy incident—this incident is being very much talked about"

"Victor sees to that"

"*Ah*!"

"Oh, I'm not asleep, Anton I have eyes and ears As I came here two boys shouted after me 'Show us a miracle! Show us a miracle, Monsieur Hazard'"

"There, you see? You see how the family name is dragged in? And what did you say? Took no notice, I hope That is the only dignified way"

"I took notice all right," Barbet answered with a grin hitching

his heels on to the bar of his chair and hugging his knees with clasped hands "I took them back into the woods and told them all they wanted to know about birds, and a bit more We parted friends"

This was another diversion One found, with Barbet, that one was continually led into talking about what interested him I will say what I want to say, Anton thought Twice I've tried Now I'll make him listen

'Listen to me," he said, the wall map deserted "Very strong representations have been made to me as mayor of this town that you are not a fit and proper person to be in charge of prisoners In fact, I have been asked to recommend the authorities to make a change. I refused, of course.'

Thank you Why did you refuse?'

Because you are a member of the family Whatever personal differences—

Only for that reason?

Isn't it enough? Mother is positively hostile to me, but she is my mother, I refuse to quarrel with her I am, after all, a Frenchman. What would be thought of me if I ceased to visit her on the appropriate occasions or deprived my own brother of a *source of income*? Though I take this opportunity of saying that neither you nor she makes much response I am told that you go to the Cheval Pie"

"My good Anton, I don't spend five francs a week on drink I'll willingly give you as much '

It's not a question of five francs or five hundred francs. It's the impression it creates—my own brother in the enemy's camp"

I like the music and the open air The Lion Rouge is too important for me, too much like the Senate—or the Bourse"

And you like the dancing?'

I do indeed'

And the girl? I hear you have lent her a mandolin"

Is that a sin?"

It is indiscreet. You have been seen in the woods with her That night she was at the Maison Hazard'

"That's all one with the mandolin She and Frédéric came that evening to borrow it"

"She is a corrupt woman"

"No," said Barbet

"She is a harlot"

"No," said Barbet

"You will be telling me next she is a virgin"

"Ah, no," said Barbet with a smile, "that would be expecting too much of mankind"

At this point, Victor's head appeared round the door

"I beg your pardon I see you are engaged I looked in with a message from Bette"

Barbet rose at once, glad of the interruption, and went out As soon as he was gone, Victor began

"That girl Thérèse—"

"You have been listening," said Anton

"Listening? Bette and I have been discussing her She is a great danger, Anton She has ability that girl Leave her there and she will work up the Cheval Pie until "

"Nonsense Her songs are stale People will soon tire of her Besides, the Cheval Pie is falling to pieces All very well in spring and summer but in winter they'll feel the pinch There are holes in the floor you could fall through and the roof leaks She can't work up the Cheval Pie without half rebuilding it—and where's the capital coming from?"

"From you, Anton, if you're wise"

"I'm wiser than that Let the thing die, I say"

"But if someone else—"

"Who?"

"Anyone with a little money, a little enterprise and an eye for that girl Anyone from Angoulême or Limoges—perhaps even from Bordeaux"

Anton ceased instantly to be the benevolent mayor of Roussignac

"Now," he said, "come to the point Sit down" He had remembered suddenly having been told that Hurtaux, of Angoulême, had visited the Cheval Pie Hurtaux had enterprise, was a speculator in

all trades, he had money—or he knew where to raise it, certainly he had an eye for a girl They talked for half an hour and more, each determined not to mention the name of Hurtaux At the end of the conversation, Victor went off to visit the widow Sernet, so satisfied by his morning that he threw up his head as he entered the square. Above the roofs was a cloudless sky of May with the depth of a receding paleness and an absolute calm Remembering what Hurtaux had said of Therèse, he thought that he would have a few words with her before visiting Madame Sernet She was a greedy animal and would eat out of any dish

Chapter 7

AFTER LEAVING HIS BROTHER, BARBET HAD GONE to the Cheval Pie At this hour of the morning the tables were empty Frédéric, in shirt-sleeves and apron, was washing them and the zinc chairs, he had tipped them over that they might dry more easily, but he found a place where Monsieur Barbet might sit with his head in the shade of a plane-tree but his knees and hands in the sun

"How is business, Frédéric?"

The youth smiled at him, showing his teeth like a young white rat prematurely aged, and said that sometimes it was extremely tiring, then, as though he feared that this might be taken as admission of defeat and so as an act of disloyalty to Therèse, he added, echoing her optimism "But new people come They seem to be interested A very rich stranger has been here twice Thérese heard of him when she lived in Angoulême Hurtaux, he's called But I don't know what will come of it all"

"Of what?"

"Well, you see, it leads to nothing, does it? And Thérèse is always thinking that it will She works and works She's strong And she has what she calls 'her star' But I haven't Do you see what she has done about the piano? No, it's indoors now But you see that wooden slope, down from the doorstep? She made it, and put the piano on wheels We don't have to lift it now And she says she's going to make a platform so that when she dances everyone can see her feet"

Frédéric's eyes were wide in admiration of her energy, but his body drooped at the thought of it He brought out a pink sirup on a

saucer "Your grenadine," he said, and, having set it down, continued as though he had not been interrupted

"She's mad, I think Do you know—while I am going round the tables each evening to see that everyone has his drink before the first song begins, she sits in that little room on the right of the door with her face between her hands and her cheeks pressed up by her fingers. I don't know what she thinks about or how she does it, but when I go in to say everything's ready and she stands up, she's two inches taller and her eyes flash and sometimes she says it's the Bois and sometimes it's a place she's heard of in Montmartre, and she knows who's there and what they're wearing, and they are all waiting for *her* She says most of them are half dead, she says their blood doesn't flow, she has to make it Then she says that's why they hate her and always will Do you know, Monsieur Barbet, once she said to me—to me 'That's why you hate me, but you don't know it You do whatever I tell you and so will they, but what they *love* is someone who is so nearly themselves that they don't feel the drag People want you to tuck them up and let them sleep,' she said 'They hate you inside themselves if you raise them from the dead.'"

"You remember it all," said Barbet, "word for word"

"Oh, yes,' Frederic answered "You see, I'm consumptive I shan't live long" He wandered off and began to set the tables upright again in readiness for the customers who might come in a little before noon

Above the houses opposite the Cheval Pie the sky was emptied of the blue that had made it opaque an hour earlier Its transparency drew on the eye, there was no longer a roof above the earth but space itself, and Barbet did not hear Therèse approach him

"Good morning, Monsieur Barbet," she said "Now it is you who are going on a voyage—and further than Paris!"

He had supposed her chair to be empty, but she was seated opposite him and he looked at her without surprise

"It wasn't much of a voyage,' he said "I was thinking about the vineyard as far as I remember"

Wishing professionally to entertain her customer, she began by

asking him about the vines He said that, if there was no setback, the season would be early this year, already the vines were in leaf, and that *morning* his mother had heard the *ortolan* "At least, I suppose she did Often she's deaf, or seems to be, but she's always the first to hear the binetu" Thérèse listened, at first with politeness only, she was worried about her dancing shoes, a heel had loosened, she had secured it, now it was loose again, she must have new shoes The thought of what they would cost tugged at her mind, she defied it, as she did all her present troubles, by saying to herself—it's quite sensible, it's not extravagant really, it's a professional expense, and she drew courage from her future, from Paris, from the fame and glitter that would enable her to look back on the Cheval Pie as—I wonder, she thought, whether I shall remember this particular morning, sitting here, the iron leg of the chair against my ankle, and worrying about the heel of my dancing shoe "Oh, yes," she said, "the binetu"

Barbet smiled at her polite failure to be interested in the bird "Can you imitate him?"

Her face became animated at once She forgot her shoes

"Of course I can!" she exclaimed "Been-been been towoo-woo! Been-been been towoo-woo! Is that right? Have you ever thought how funny it must be to make that sound from inside yourself? I mean— No, I suppose it isn't funny really, not if you are a binetu, but—" She broke off, shaking her head "That's what's wrong with me I haven't any imagination—except my own kind"

"What is your own kind?"

"Oh, Paris On and on—always the same—me, me, me If you go on imagining the same thing always, it's like being shouted at, it's like hammers inside your head What was Frédéric talking to you about?"

"He's tired," said Barbet

She was pitiless "Tired So he ought to be I have to drive him if we are going to run this place between us and look after that old thing upstairs Then he says 'Suppose you do succeed Suppose you do get to Paris What will happen then?'"

"What will happen?" Barbet asked

"Someone will buy the Cheval Pie. Your brother probably"

"But Frederic?"

'Oh," she cried impatiently "I can't look so far ahead He's dying anyway So is the old woman Let's hope they both go out together That's cruel and heartless, isn't it? Well, now you now—I am like that"

"No," said Barbet, "you are not If you were, you wouldn't boast about it."

"You see," she said, taking no notice of this, "I'm not really a coward, but I get panics You have money and a settled position and a job that goes on day after day, week after week, it's easy for you not to be frightened No it s not It's just as hard for you as it is for me. I suppose, if I was really any good, I should *know* that Paris was coming, just as you knew, when you walked into the courtyard of the prison, that Blachere and the rest would eat out of your hand Sometimes I do know, then I'm happy, and I'm kind even to Frederic, but sometimes it seems hopeless How do I ever begin? How do I get out of this place?'

"By being yourself," said Barbet.

'That's not how it s usually done. It's done by being what audiences expect you to be"

To his own astonishment, Barbet slapped the table with his hand Why do you lie? he said "You're not cruel You're not heartless You don t know as much as a tenth rate girl in a chorus about how to flatter an audience If you did, you'd sing your songs better"

She opened her eyes and smiled broadly "They are not my songs They are someone else's songs They're stale songs That's why If they were mine—"

'That s what I was saying," Barbet interrupted "Now you have said it yourself And I want another grenadine"

You shall have it on the house," said Therese

When she was gone, he thought it wasn't really a good imitation of the binetu she gave, it should be a single, not a double note at the end of the call—not 'towoo-woo", but the sound she made was more than an imitation, it had herself in it, her own sadness and gaiety At first, people would say That's wrong, that isn't the bird

call, but soon it would give them more of the binetu than their own memory of him, and, when they heard him again in the vines, they would miss the double note and say That's odd, the binetu is different this year

He would tell Fontan of Thérèse's version of the binetu and Fontan would pick it out on the spare mandolin or on a fiddle Barbet began to hum a song—a rambling, improvised narrative of the vineyard, with a soft lilt as its undercurrent and now and then a bird-call to break the lilt and point it The bird calls existed chiefly in his mind, he had little voice to reproduce them, so he drummed them on the table with his fingers and breathed them almost soundlessly with his lips, cocking his head and hearing them with the ears of his imagination His songs were of two kinds, Fontan said—the tinklers and the throbbers This, being a narrative, was grave and throbbing, though not, for Barbet, less happy than those he sang to livelier tunes It might have continued for a long time, verse after verse strung together on haphazard rhymes, like the voyaging tales he had chanted to himself when he was a boy, lying in his bed, awake by daylight, but Therese returned with his sirup and, after a couple of verses in her presence, he came out of the vineyard and stopped

"Sing another," she said

"There isn't any more I make it up as I go along"

"I didn t say 'more,' I said 'another'"

"Oh, well," said Barbet, most of them go as fast as they come Fontan has written some down

"'There was a lady sat in the shade
With her feet in a patch of the sun '"

He wondered if she was still interested

"Go on," she said "What is that one about? What happened to the lady?'

"That depends," Barbet replied ' It depends on who she is As far as I remember, the first time I hit on that one was on a winter's afternoon, walking back from Roussignac in the snow I had been in the church to find the cure, but he wasn't there, and I had stood staring at the picture of the Annunciation "

'I like that picture too"

He nodded "The song was about that. But it's been about other things since There are dozens of versions, I'm afraid When you come to think of it, there's scarcely any story that might not begin

> "'*There was a lady sat in the shade*
> *With her feet in a patch of the sun*'

Or there's the Reed Song, Fontan likes that, it's about starlings, but it's about battles as well Or there's a crowd of little songs about *swimming*—there's one about the water that was lying still, suddenly I jumped in and began to swim, and the song isn't about *me* but about the water Then there are dozens of songs of not more than four or eight lines each, and some of them don't even *rhyme*, *some* aren't verses at all and don't pretend to be. Things that came *into my head with a tune attached*

"'I have two oars in my hands Why do I feel that I must be fair to them, as if they were alive'

"'I said a stupid thing I wish I could unsay it But you alone can unsay it by not remembering my foolishness when you remember me'

"'Now I shall lie down but I shan't fall asleep haphazard I shall watch myself falling asleep, then I shall sleep well I shall watch myself falling asleep, like a bright coin twisting through clear water until it is a gleam and disappears'"

That would be a song to end a programme!" Thérese exclaimed 'Sing it now, sing it to your tune. Then I will *make* it" She sprang up Come to the piano Try it Let me try it Fréde! *Frédé*!

In the little parlour at the entrance of the inn, Frédéric was set down on a creaking piano-stool He stumbled laboriously into Barbet's tunes. Therèse swept him aside as soon as she had in her head enough words of each song to enable her to experiment with it Nothing came from her as Barbet had expected it to come The grave lilts she quickened, the simple, meditative words she delivered

with a violent accent of mockery, the cheerful ditties she sang with the solemn intensity of an awe struck choir-boy—changing everything, exaggerating everything

"I know! I know!" she cried "I know I am overdoing all of it I want it loose! Then I can shake it into my own pattern"

After a little while, letting her hands fall from the keys, she gazed at Barbet

"You are patient You don't seem to mind"

"Why should I?"

"These are your songs! I'm not singing them the way you wanted them"

"Not yet But you will"

She shook her head violently, determined not to deceive this considerate author

"Oh no I shan't Never I shan't sing them like *this* This is all ragged and extravagant But I shall still make the solemn ones gay and gay ones solemn That's *me!* That's my invention about your songs That's how to treat them" She awaited challenge

"Of course it is, Thérese," Barbet said 'Gay and grave—of course, in my songs, they're interchangeable Thank you for telling me"

She asked seriously if she might use his songs Might she have the music Fontan had written down? Yes, Barbet said, but would she, in return, sing and dance one evening in the courtyard of the prison? She clasped her hands in her lap and moved her head slowly in refusal Barbet observed her with astonishment

"No?" he said "I don't understand Why not? Why won't you give a performance in the prison? Not now In June perhaps Or in the hot weather—in July You are not frightened? Good heavens, they won't hurt you!"

"I know that" She made no further reply, but twisted round on the music stool and jerked her head up and away from him so that the muscle of her neck was as taut as her straightened arms

"Why?" he asked

"Because—why do you want that?"

"So that Fontan can hear It's partly his music"

'Is that all you can think of?"

"What else is there?"

She closed her lips. Then suddenly she exclaimed, struggling with herself "It's the devil in me makes me want to say 'yes'"

'Oh," said Barbet, "we all flatter ourselves about our devils," at which she turned on him a face transformed, lit with a terrible animation, a lamp flashed violently in his eyes.

"They are shut up, your prisoners They are men Are you blind?'

"No," he said. "I'm not blind And I'm not afraid All men are prisoners That's no reason to use one's prison as a hiding place."

'On your head be it, then"

He laughed at her "How you dramatize yourself—your devil and your prisoners! On my head be it, certainly Besides, it was all a lie—you wanted to come, you—"

'I said so"

'You meant to come?"

'I suppose so I—"

'Then why lie about yourself? Why pretend to be afraid of your own power? You're not, you know"

Oh,' she cried, 'very well You know too much for a man I'll come If I'm a genius, I'm a genius, and if I'm a bitch, I'm a bitch Tant pis! But it won't be a performance for monks and little girls."

Turning to the piano, she laid her hands on the keys, then swerved to him

Other people are afraid of me," she said "Why aren't you?"

You try that song," he answered. "It's only the sham people who talk about their own devils. You'll drive them in harness—or drink yourself to death"

She leapt to her feet and seized his shoulders

'My God! What are you—mad?'

'No Sane. So are *you* Now, sit down and sing"

She obeyed but mocked him. "Would you like to hear it as if an angel were singing it—a sane angel, not given to drink?"

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"Because—why do you want that?"

"Don't let me interrupt you," he said "My dear Barbet, I beg you not to go on my account"

"It's not on your account," Barbet answered "It's time I was on my way home"

Victor plied Therese's curiosity "I wanted you alone A little matter I have something to say to you" She came to his table, accepted absinthe, listened with animation I could have her myself, Victor thought, the idea fascinated and revolted him, he would have liked to humiliate her, to throw her down and leave her, to count coins into an abject hand "You have such talent You are wasting yourself in this place"

She smiled, an easy dupe "My songs or my dances? Do other people say so? What did Monsieur Hurtaux say? Hasn't he a share in a cafe concert at Bordeaux?"

Victor was not yet willing to advance as far as Monsieur Hurtaux

"Your songs and your dances—well yes, of course they will come You are inexperienced as yet But they will come" He turned his eyes full into hers "It wasn't of them I was speaking"

'Of what, then?'

'Those eyes tell me you know well enough, my dear"

"Indeed, no'

'I will be explicit then All the men in Angoulême, in Cognac, in Roussignac itself are not those who come to gape in this garden when you kick your skirts in the air Even the *most beautiful* picture must be brought to market Every business needs management Now—'

"Are you proposing yourself, monsieur, as a lover or as—"

"An agent, said Victor with a little bow

"To bring men to *me*!"

'Precisely '

She gave no sign of anger "To *bring* them," she exclaimed "Ah, that is a good joke! It is a joke that wouldn't have occurred to you monsieur, if you knew how men were made Why do you not propose yourself as agent to the honey? What commission would you charge for the introduction of each bee?"

Victor controlled himself, not because he believed Thérèse to be

"Yes," he said, "I should, if angels are in your mind Not otherwise"

While she was singing this song, Victor came to the Cheval Pie Other customers were before him, they and he were served by Frédéric, and Victor, as soon as he had sipped from his glass, went in the direction of the music Standing a little aside from the window, he looked in attentively Barbet was leaning against the wall beside the piano, his face lighted, his eyes upon Thérèse, making no attempt to conceal his eagerness for her song—or was it for the girl herself? Sometimes he intervened with that swift assurance, that absence of self distrust, which seemed to Victor inexplicable in a man so unassertive, and Thérèse listened, almost in submission, while he sang his version of the song, before throwing up a defiant head to sing her own which, though all her own, was yet an interpretation of his. They clashed, disputed, interrupted each other, but from their clashes agreement sprang as though there were in each song a hidden perfection that yielded itself to neither singly but was recognized by both in the instant of its emergence Victor had the impression that he was watching something altogether new in his experience of human nature, as though the two figures, whom the window framed, were not the Barbet and Thérèse whom he knew separately—the wiry little man whose independence was like a flame, the lustful, fierce girl with the guile of a gipsy and the dark wariness of an animal at bay—but two beings appeased in each other's company, not held in the tension of their differences, but at ease with the profound ease of two friends met after long division or of two poplars swaying in the same wind To Victor the sight was intolerable He went in, and no sooner had he slid open the parlour door than the music ceased abruptly, he saw what a fool he had been for Barbet was precisely what he had supposed Barbet to be and Thérèse was the girl he knew—with a flashing, wanton pride as her advertisement and her defence Victor decided that she was trying to seduce Barbet because he had money and was easy prey He hoped she would succeed, for Barbet was of the kind she might destroy

"You believe that?"

'Believe? I know it. She's that kind of a fool"

"Then why—"

'You ask 'why'? Why do men and women do what they do? You can look at Therèse and still ask why she opens the door at night!'

"A romantic," said Victor, "an animal" He spoke each of these words in a zoological tone, as if he were reading the label on a wild beast's cage From so foreign a subject he turned to ask politely 'It prevents you from sleeping?'

'Nothing stops me sleeping if I want to sleep But I'd like to get behind that girl as I did when she was younger Only the switch would quiet her then You give her to Hurtaux I shall enjoy that in my grave And now," Madame Sernet continued, "how far has it gone? Has he mentioned a price?"

other than a harlot She had repulsed him now—that was her little vanity, she would value his services in time Had not she herself spoken of Hurtaux? No doubt she was casting her line for him—a big fish A diseased one, too, Victor reflected in satisfaction, a man of unusual tastes, not gentle with his women Very well, if it was Hurtaux she wanted, Hurtaux she should have And, in any case, Victor had other business at the Cheval Pie

"I promised to call upon your aunt," he said, setting down his empty glass

"Good," said Thérèse, "you know your way"

He entered the inn, climbed a double flight of stairs and knocked

The widow Sernet was saved from baldness by a wisp of mottled hair down the centre line of her head Victor inquired of her health

"Now," she said, "what offer have you?"

"From Anton Hazard, I regret, as yet, none"

"Then why are you here? It is always the same"

"I spoke to you of Monsieur Georges Hurtaux He has been here more than once I think he is interested"

"Interested?" the old woman exclaimed "In what—the house or the girl? From what I know of Hurtaux—"

Victor with a smile acknowledged her shrewdness "Primarily," he said, "in the house, I think"

Madame Sernet began to chuckle "Well, the girl goes with it That noise in the garden up to all hours! And there's a young man comes creeping back when the rest are gone"

"One?"

"It may not always be the same one But if they're different, they all make the same noise, coming and going She makes him take his shoes off—but I hear every whisper, every creak of the stair I can hear her shoulders drop against the wall when he kisses her"

"Still," Victor suggested consolingly, "it brings in money, I'll be bound?"

"Not a sou"

"She keeps it from you—all of it?"

"She don't take it"

Roused by this fling at Pierre, Renée answered with spirit "And I suppose he will cook their food and do the washing and clean the house?"

"Madame Garbut will come in by the day."

"You have arranged that?"

"Not yet, but she will come"

"She's stone deaf!"

"Barbet," said Madame Hazard with mysterious impressiveness, "will make her hear"

"Heavens above," Renee cried, 'he'll have to shout!"

She and Pierre began to prepare for their marriage and departure, giving out that they were glad to dissociate themselves from Barbet's household and had consented to occupy his cottage only in loyalty to the family Their behaviour was much applauded, for Victor had done his work well, and many who loved Barbet were afraid to say so lest they should be considered enemies of the established order or be laughed at as dupes

In the prison itself, that evening of rebellion had an enduring and subtle influence Blachere, his leadership gone, isolated him self from the rest When they were allowed the freedom of the courtyard, he would often remain, cowed and sullen, at the back of his cell, making no comment, even on his food The others had expected that Barbet *would speak* of the incident and punish them for their share in it, if he had done so it would have been a relief to them, for they found that they could not speak of it among them selves It baffled them and made them shy of speech What had happened? In what way had they been fooled? They had been shouting in the courtyard—so much they knew clearly They had believed that they would break free, had been under Blachère's sway—they remembered the sick frenzy of it Then stillness had come upon them, an end to hammering in the brain, there had been glow worms at their feet and they had kneeled, like fools, like chil dren and suddenly they were back in their cells, breathing slow and long like children cooled after a fever Now, whenever they

Chapter 8

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Madame Hazard, because a scepticism was overthrown which she had hitherto considered unassailable, rushed to an extreme credulity, in the intervals of her work as housewife, which fortunately did not flag, she would sit with her hands lying palm upwards in her lap, as if she were nursing a baby, and was shocked by the blindness of the pastor and the curé who treated her with none of the reverence due to the mother of a saint Pierre continued to believe that he had been cheated What authority he had had over the prisoners seemed to him to have been undermined Before them he felt a fool and so became one Even Renée could not reassure him, and he was so evidently unhappy that at last Barbet said 'Renée, if you want to marry him, I will arrange your dowry" There was a cottage among the vineyards in which they might live, and work enough on the land Pierre need never face the prisoners again "And he needn't come into the house either!" cried Madame Hazard, who regarded his and Renée's going as a purge of unbelievers "We know well enough that Barbet can manage the prisoners alone"

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And he needn t come into the house either' cried Madame Hazard, who regarded his and Renee s going as a purge of unbelievers 'We know well enough that Barbet can manage the prisoners alone"

"Easily," she answered, and, rising from the sofa as he approached it, drew back the curtains

Everything in the room was familiar to her, the mat before the piano rucked by his pushing back the stool as she entered, the best chair in which the governesses sat when he was teaching young girls, the shelf of tattered paper in which his music was stored, the basket in which his dog slept—on all these had rested once an enchantment of squalor, which persisted now, for in her nothing died, no intimacy was utterly lost, all her lives were continuing parts of her life, and this pale young man with heavy eyelids and flushed cheeks, whose tongue was moving over his lips, had pleased her once Because of her he had come to life and before her eyes was coming to life again

'Give me your hand"

He stretched it out She carried it to her cheek, then to her lips, and released it

'Sans rancune?'

"Ah—mais—"

She took him to the piano and set up the sheaf of music she had brought with her

"Now, listen," she said 'This is serious If you can give me this music written down in the way I want it, I—"

The *sentence* remained so *long* uncompleted that he prompted her, but her imagination had run out beyond *the phrase* of swaggering ambition she would have used In these songs was not Paris only, or her fortune only In these songs—

'My God!' she exclaimed, "there'll be nothing in them if we don't work! This—it's like a psalm I want to keep the tune, but break the rhythm. I want the beat of a lame horse at the gallop "

She played it, sang it, turned to him Can you write that?'

'But you are distorting it!'

He says not.

'Who?

"Barbet."

Raymond shrugged his shoulders. "They say he's mad"

Thérèse closed *her lips* Then she said "Well, make some notes

began to speak of these events or to blame each other, shyness came into their throats They were glad to cover over remembrance of this remembered thing

Though they were not told that Pierre's duties were soon to come to an end, they seemed to be aware of it, for they paid no heed to him, asked him no questions, and treated him as one who had no further share in their lives Their attention was focussed on Barbet He told them that before long Thérèse Despreux would sing to them in the courtyard As the time came near, a piano was brought out and covered by a tarpaulin

"Can you tune it, Fontan?'

"If you bring me the tuning hammer and wedge"

To her surprise, Thérèse was unable to empty her mind of Barbet, or, when others sneered at or blamed him, to hold her tongue—until, suddenly, she found that she held her tongue always when his name was bandied across the tables of the Cheval Pie, as though what knowledge she had of him were secret

He brought her his songs, and sheets of music scribbled by Fontan in violet ink When she tried them in private, they transformed themselves, new speeds, new emphasis, new twists of meaning leapt into her mind Because she could not write down the changes she made, she played them again and again until they were fixed in her memory, and three times, in the heat of the day, took train for Angoulême to visit Raymond Truc, her former music master, and returned in time for the evening customers Seeing her again, Raymond assumed that the idea of his writing music for her was but an excuse for her coming He dragged curtains over his windows, *though they looked to the north,* and on a fringed table beside the sofa set down two long red glasses with gilded rims

'Our special glasses!'

"No one," he said, 'has been allowed to drink out of them since you deserted me"

"Am I expected to believe that?'

"How can you not believe it!

What work had she been doing in Angoulême? Wasn't there work enough at the Cheval Pie?

"But I shall not spend my life at the Cheval Pie"

She knew that she must be very guarded in Hurtaux's presence She must be professional, not too young or too eager, she must not give herself away, but he said that, when she sang, she had a style of her own which she must cultivate, and he defined her style with such accuracy, such intelligent insight, that she said to herself · Here is a man who knows!—and poured out her plans

"It is not," he said, "at present everyone's style That, precisely, is why it might become so You see, my dear, what people think they want at a cafe concert is to be horrified or to be amused, but what they really want, if they are made to want it, is all of life in twenty lines, and then again all of life in ten lines, and then again all of life in five—to laugh when they're frightened, to shudder while they laugh A great disease keeps the coin spinning You can't be sure which way it will come down, and yet, when it's down, you've always won your bet Now you"—and he laid his hand on her knee—"when you sing, you are very still You are not pretty You have a beautiful body when you dance, but when you sing you use it seldom" He slapped her thigh "Now, tell me, why is that?"

"It's not true!" she cried "It's not true! I do use my body It's my hands I don't use—not much My body and my face are *me!* When their eyes come up from my middle to my face and stay there—that's half the battle And when I *do* use a gesture it is a cord"

"A cord?"

"To pull them!" She rose beside the table and with fists clenched and arms moving at the level of her breasts dragged in to her the invisible world From her breasts, her hands slid down until her arms were straight the palms turned forward "And then to give them themselves again," she cried, throwing out her hands from the centre of her body "To give them themselves *new* That's what I want I have it in me" She sat down and lifted her glass to her lips "But I have to *learn* how to give it out."

"It is I," said Hurtaux, "who could give you a chance to learn And, if I may say so, you please me, mademoiselle"

There's Fontan's version" She thrust a pencil between his fingers He listened and wrote obediently

"Enough? Can you work on that? Now the next Listen"

For three hours she drove him At her second visit, he needed no driving He was so proud of the result of his labour, so eager for more, that, having kissed her, he made no attempt to draw the curtains or bring out the ruby glasses At once she asked for them

"And when, last time, I drew back the curtains, confess—you were a little relieved?"

His grateful vanity accepted half the implication "But what I said of these glasses was true!" he assured her, and to prove his gallantry he splintered his own against the wall

At the end of her third visit she had what she needed As she walked out, with a sheaf of music under her arm, she saw, in the window of the clockmaker's, that she was too early for the train, and loitered to watch the movement of an eighteenth century clock that he had set out for display A shoulder touched hers She looked up into the grey nostrils and black eyebrows of Georges Hurtaux

Her mind was instantly made up that he should employ her, and she gave him a welcome that bared his teeth

How much he had admired her performances at the Cheval Pie! Indeed, he assured her, several of his visits to Roussignac had been made for no other reason than to see her But she distributed her favours so evenly among her customers—the eyebrows curved upward under thick creases—that she had little time for strangers! He was staying near by at the Hôtel de France Perhaps, if she was not pressed for time—

She was not pressed for time, but had been working indoors all the hot afternoon, and if monsieur thought that a glass of lemon and water under the shade of that awning—

She was thirsty, it was a delight to be waited on, she gulped her drink like a schoolgirl and, when her glass was empty, accepted Hurtaux's suggestion of absinthe She sipped hers

"But you are not drinking your absinthe"

"*I'm not* thirsty any more"

"Does it surprise you?"

"No" With a sincerity that persuaded him, she added "But I dn't expected it I was thinking only of the work I wasn't thinkg of you at all"

"It will be necessary to think a little of me"

"No," she said

"Am I repulsive to you?"

She looked at him attentively "No"

'Or you virgin?'

"No"

"Well? Come—"

"No," she said 'It is impossible"

"And why? What is it you want—a contract? You shall have it." Her eyes met his. "For Bordeaux," he added. "Three months —to sing and dance"

"Not for a contract Not for money"

So improbable a scruple puzzled him "For what, then?"

'Not for a contract Not for money," she said, gathering her music under her arm and forcing herself, in control of stormy disappointment, to repeat aloud an incantation of her mind "Oh," she said with a smile, "it isn't nobility of soul I expect it's only superstition"

'Unprofitable, mademoiselle"

'Not in the end'

"The end?'

'You *are not a fool*, monsieur In the end, a whore buys contracts for a whore, but an artist sleeps in what bed she pleases"

'Perhaps—in the end," said *Hurtaux* with good humour "But even an artist must begin"

When she left him, she went on to the ramparts and looked over their edge on to the shelving house roofs and the great plain below She was tired, there was half an hour to spare, and she sat down on a sun peeled bench The heat of the day was past, a cool, peaceful breeze moved on the ramparts, stroking her cheeks and ankles. She closed her eyes, and imagined the gritty courtyard of the Cheval

He explained, in the language of a company promoter advancing a prospectus, that he had inherited his father's business in the manufacture of paper, had expanded it, was rich. He and his brother Henri, a restaurant proprietor in Bordeaux, had determined to extend their activities to the business of entertainment. Already, in Bordeaux, they had established a café concert. Now they were planning another in Angoulême, perhaps a third in Limoges, both feeders to the Boîte d'Argent at Bordeaux. And some day, Lyons and Paris! A network of entertainment throughout France—a web with its centre in Paris. Like the organization of an army, said Hurtaux, the companies moving under orders from place to place, promotion following promotion, every dancing-girl with a chance to become a star.

In spite of her resolve not to appear too young or too eager, her eyes became fixed on his face.

"Could I have a chance in Bordeaux?"

"In Bordeaux! You must be patient, my dear. You must wait until we open a Boîte d'Argent here. Angoulême is where you must begin."

"When?"

"Perhaps in the autumn."

"Perhaps in the autumn!" She shook her head, and pushed towards him the pile of music on their table. "I have my songs now. I am ready for Bordeaux. I will ask Barbet to let you come to the prison when I sing there. You will see that I am ready."

"All things are possible," he said. "Or perhaps could be made possible."

"How?"

"I could write to my brother at Bordeaux."

"You will? You will? Oh—"

He waved his hand as though it were the wand of a magician and set his eyes on her. "It is understood, then?"

"What?"

"It is understood between us?"

There was no mistaking him now. She did not blame him or pretend that she did not understand.

"Why do you want that?"

"I have a yearly agreement with Anton about the sale of my place. It has to be renewed. I have been to the lawyer."

"I have been to a music master," she said. "I wanted a setting for my songs—your songs."

On their way to the station and on the platform she told him as much as she chose to tell of her adventures.

"Therese," he said as the train started, "what happens when people come to you with their troubles?"

"The great Hurtaux," she replied with a swift, ironic glance, "was kind enough to say that I had humanity."

"Ah well," said Barbet. "Humanity? That may be. When you suffer, you write the suffering off. You don't hate. Isn't that true?"

"I hate furiously for a bit," she answered. "Then I go on to the *next thing*."

Barbet considered her with attention. "But you are always acting. You are acting now."

"Is it *wrong* for *me*—*to act*?" Barbet grinned at her emphasis. "Why is it wrong—even if it's true?" she persisted. "Why mustn't I act—in life?"

"Because, if you do, no one but a fool will have the courage to trust you and you may break your heart before you find one with courage enough."

She was afraid and shook her head and answered. "I shall still have my acting."

"No," he said, "*you may ruin that*. Acting must always be larger than life and if your life is itself a part—well, your acting will have to puff itself out like the *frog in the fable*."

"Then," she asked, "what must I do?"

"Be yourself and give yourself away. . . . There," he added hastily. "I don't know why I *should* have said that. I have no authority—certainly none to teach you your job. You might as well teach me how to be a cooper."

"Or a gaoler?" said Thérèse.

She had expected him to flinch, but he answered with unperturbed and thoughtful candour: "You think it is wrong?"

Pie and the heat of the kitchen while she prepared her aunt's supper

But afterwards I shall sing and dance!

Even the idea of performance struck no fire in her Imagination gave no response By now Hurtaux was in his bedroom at the Hôtel de France He would find another girl, and she be left for ever in Roussignac Her feet were sore, her chemise was sticking to her, her finger-nail was caught in a paint-blister on the bench

It seemed to her that her refusal had been hypocritical, the product of a false and unintelligent pride "Not for a contract! Not for money!" No virtuous woman would give her any credit for that

It's time that you, Thérèse Despreux, stopped whimpering She shook herself defiantly What did she care for the opinion of virtuous women? They weren't artists, they had no blood in them . And that, she thought, is an ignorant, stupid, extravagant thing to say I wish I were good No, I don't I wish I wanted to be good No, I don't "Not for money! Not for a contract!" God, I'm tired

She looked at her watch, and, raising her eyes from it, saw at a distance Barbet's hatless and shaggy head She was not in a mood to speak to him, if she was still and lowered her head, he would pass She tucked her hands under her and watched his approaching shadow It halted She felt his weight upon the bench

"You *look very fresh and alive*," he said "Even at the end of June, are you never tired?"

She gazed at him in astonishment

"You still sit on your hands," he said "You did that when you were a little girl"

She began to laugh "'Fresh—alive—not tired!'"

"Isn't it true?"

"You imagine things"

"But isn't it true?"

"For you it may be"

"Not for you?"

But she would not admit it "There," she said "It's time we started for the station if you are coming back by this train What have you been doing in Angoulême?"

It wasn't a romantic reason for chastity, but it was her own reason, valid for her

"How shall you live in Paris when you get there?" he asked, looking up from the roll of music that he had been balancing between his hands.

"Probably with men," she answered, trying to provoke him. "Are you going to tell me that that is wrong—if I keep myself by my job? I wasn't created to be a nun"

"No," said Barbet "I wasn't thinking about right and wrong But it seems to me that, for you, it might be more lonely than being alone"

She caught her breath "That frightens me. You say things sometimes," she continued slowly, "that sound as if I were saying them inside myself—or would some day"

"But it was you who said to me that it was wrong to keep animals shut up in cages."

"Oh," she cried, "we say and say—but nothing means anything until we say it to ourselves I suppose it's true. I have imagined myself that way—anyhow the flowers and the carriage and the yellow gloves and a bed the size of a room and lace pillows and an enormous tiger on the hearth"

"A tiger?" said Barbet

She rose and stretched herself "An enormous tiger I've imagined it all When we arrive, are you going to walk up with me to the Cheval Pie? If you do, it will look as if we had been to Angoulême together"

"Instead of which, we have been to Paris," said Barbet "Are you tired now?"

"Tired? No" She looked at him "I was"

"Who else was in the train?" Madame Sernet inquired, but, though Thérèse recalled the names of a few fellow passengers, she had nothing to say of them, no gossip, no comment on their appearance nor would she give a good reason for her having lately visited Angoulême three times. "Surely," said her aunt, "it can't be that Barbet Hazard is your latest victim?"

"I shouldn't have thought it was your job to keep even animals in cages"

"Well," he said, "the thing isn't as simple as that, just as the question whether a man should refuse to fight in battle isn't as simple as some people imagine. To refuse to kill, to refuse to possess, to refuse to keep a prison: there's an easy vanity in all those negatives that puts me in mind of the scribes and pharisees. Besides, you know, I'm not really an argumentative man I am not at all clever. I'm not even clever enough to be persuaded by other people's arguments All the way from here to Roussignac, you could give me reasons against my keeping the prison, and I dare say I should be unable to answer you But do you think that would make any difference? I should be the same at the end as I was at the beginning Perhaps that is a weakness. What really persuades me to change something is that suddenly I see it changed in my own mind It's the same with birds. I know how to find birds in special places, not because I've thought out from experience such a bird is likely to be in such a place at such a time, but because suddenly one evening a corner of the Long Wood comes into my mind as I'm ladling out the prisoners' supper —the trees, every branch, every leaf, the smell, the sound of it, and there are the birds, and, if I go to find them, there *are* the birds"

"Always?"

"Yes. If the imagination was—ah!" he exclaimed, "but you know the difference between *that* and fancying a thing without truth in it. You see," he added, "that was why I went into the courtyard as I did on the evening you came for the mandolin, and why everything happened as it did All this fuss people make—my poor mother, too! Was it a miracle? Was it this? Was it that? It was no more a miracle than making a good barrel, or your finding yourself in Paris because you have already seen yourself in Paris"

Nothing gave her more pleasure in his company than that he was one of those human beings who do not always expect to be answered She said nothing, but wondered whether Barbet would despise her if he had overheard her conversation with Hurtaux, above all if he had known how little discriminating between man and man had been her reason for refusing him. "Not for money, not for a contract."

of the shoes and braces she yielded herself with a passion which alone could blot out for an hour knowledge that her integrity was being sapped He was enchanted, supposing that he was specially favoured He preened himself on his conquest, not observing how, when all was done, she turned her head on the pillow, away from him, away from man, facing herself in her fortress Though she had imprisoned him, it was she, none the less, who had been invaded She would turn her naked back upon him and withdraw, not into the vapid regrets of spent desire, but into her own secret, as a captive animal, remembering the jungle, withdraws into the darkest corner of his cage There was no revulsion from the man To prove it, she would turn like a panther, gather herself into his flattered arms and swear she loved him Poor fool, he took her at her outward valuation of herself—no blame on him What did he know of the fortress? If he had known and stormed it—ah, that would be something! He didn't even suspect its existence, yet he had trodden within it This was her private hell—that all men, all, all, even when they said and believed that they loved her, were unaware of—what? was it real? was she lying to herself? Doubts came, her being shook, she would begin to cry Then after a little while "No! No! I'm sorry I didn t mean to do that I was only crying because—" It was a sentence she had never finished.

Now at her table under the plane trees, she rubbed the pinkness of her elbows for the weight of her head had been upon them, and remembered the railway carriage and Barbet's head and the eyes looking out from it He knows where he treads. He recognizes me He s not an enemy

You fool!" she said aloud "He's like the rest He's like the rest He s like the rest"

She started up from the table and returned to her work, shouting for Fredenc

"Victim? Oh that! No!"

It had not entered her mind The corners of her mouth drooped in a rueful and secretive smile How odd! She set herself to imagine Barbet as her lover, for it was part of her bitterness—of her pride she would have said—that no rule forbade her any experiment but the ugly, drooping smile vanished, and, as soon as she was gone from her aunt s room into the open, she sat down at a zinc table and stared She did not think of Barbet, but of herself as she had been before men had known her

The recollection was not idyllic or sentimental, not even happy, but cool and hard It was of a girl who, in face of a world that gave her little affection and not enough to eat, had held her own with intuitive self reliance, as though she were living in an impregnable fortress to which, as long as she held it, God who knew her state, would bring supplies The fortress was hers still, it was in fevered proof of ownership that she ran up all her flags of defiance and courage, but she knew that it had been undermined Each man who had taken her and gone each from whom she herself had taken—what were they? men—one a better or a worse lover than the last, she bore them no grudge, they had been her pleasure as she had been theirs, she had surrendered *herself* to none—and yet her fortress had been undermined by them though none had left an individual mark upon her life, and she remembered each less by his character than by his physical attributes the nature of her security had been affected by the cumulative disturbance of their shifting tenancies She hated them collectively for this though towards any one of them she was without resentment and whenever she accepted a new lover, impelled by a desire for experiment by heat of blood by the cry of age at her heels, by delight in the present beauty of her body, a dazzling answer to all criticism of her face she was thrilled by her helplessness and power as drug takers are by theirs She observed with painful detachment whether the man was afraid shy brutal whether he was proud of his hands whether he emptied his pockets always on to the same shelf, what he did with his shoes—a detachment so precise and so full of wry amusement at the repetitive behaviour of the male animal in his lusts that to the particular owner

'Oh well," said he, 'it's not to be wondered at. I rage myself when someone standing beside my chair tries to play my hand"

But you are wise," said Thérese, gazing at him as though he were a surprising creature of a different species "You don't shout at them I do! I can't help it. It's physical. Oh, I wish I were *circumspect*!' She rolled out the long word with elaborate intonation "I make people *hate* me, because I'm earthy I'm an animal. I bite I can't help it And yet I like almost everyone I suppose that's a fault, too?"

In spite of her "rages," she was inwardly calm Nothing was of importance to her but her songs. She forgot Hurtaux, and, when he appeared again at the Cheval Pie, recognized him without a tremor and spoke to him without embarrassment, as though their conversation in Angouleme were of the remote past. Victor's malice left her untouched, and when Anton, in his capacity of mayor, sent for her in his office to reprove her for the breach of a trifling rule intending to provoke her, she accepted her scolding with a submissiveness that disarmed him. Now, what is happening to me? she asked herself I have never behaved so well before I must be dying

Victor was active meanwhile He visited Angoulême, intent to discover Barbet s reason for going there, but could find only the reason openly professed—that the time had come to renew the agreement about the Maison Hazard 'It's plain enough. He went to visit the lawyer, said Anton 'It was arranged between us I had been a week earlier Good heavens, man, what do you suspect him of—a murder?"

He came back with Therese Despreux," Victor answered

Bless you said Anton, 'if you are going to put Barbet to bed with the Despreux, you—and she—are cleverer than I take you for And if it were true, what then?"

What then?" Victor exclaimed angrily 'Even Barbet can't ride a dozen horses at once. A keeper of a prison, a lecher and a saint! Prove him hypocrite as well as blasphemer, and that will be the end of him. You are mayor It would be your duty to act."

Chapter 9

IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, SHE EXPERIENCED for the first time in her life an appeasement, as though a wind had dropped. She sang Barbet's songs at the Cheval Pie. They were applauded, for her audience knew her, but whoever considered that he was privileged to give her advice, said in her ear: "That and that and that were charming, but *this* surely was wrong," praising the familiar tricks that a hundred competent diseuses could do as well or better, resisting what was her own. In every song, what stirred hostility was the one quality—a lilt, a poise of body, a flash of mind—that sprang fresh from inside herself.

"But if I don't do that, it's not *me*!"

"Come, my dear, no audience would accept it. No audience but this. We swallow the pill for the sake of the jam."

"O God," she exclaimed, "anyone can give you the jam."

At this stage of her experimenting with Barbet's songs, she was fiercely stubborn. Whether criticism was good or bad she did not stay to ask, but flouted it violently. Her own ideas were in flux; criticism confused and arrested her, as comment over a painter's shoulder, while his struggle has scarcely begun, is, to him, valueless. Even goodwill so delivered she flung back into the giver's face as though it were an insult, for she had not that craftiness of conciliation which would have enabled her to say: Thank you. I don't know yet whether you are right or wrong. Thank you—but I must find out for myself. She made herself hated by those who failed to understand that this seeming arrogance was but a defensive cry that she was still in rehearsal.

To Barbet she confessed her rages.

house, and proceeded, as his custom was, to discuss the affairs of the parish, approaching the subject of Barbet not directly—for he knew that the priest had a liking for Barbet—but by way of the approaching marriage between Renée and Pierre, a legitimate topic, for the Vincents were Catholics, the Hazards Protestants, Renee was about to be received into the Catholic Church, and Pierre, though a dolt in Victor's opinion, was after all his brother The marriage would leave Barbet to look after the prisoners single handed In the circumstances, was that wise?

'In what circumstances?" the priest asked

Victor was silent When pressed, he said modestly that any opinion of his must be discounted, for he and Barbet were of opposite temperaments and there were, in any case, differences between the families of Hazard and Vincent

'Which this marriage," said Lancret, 'will do nothing to heal?'

On the contrary," Victor replied

Renee, he explained, having become a Catholic and not being, in any case, Madame Hazard s daughter, would throw in her lot with her husband, and Pierre, though he had no present alternative to employment by the Hazards, would work in the vineyards and the farm only Once they are clear of it, Pierre and Renee will not set foot in that house again except, perhaps, on special occasions I have told Pierre,' Victor continued, "that I think he is going too far"

A storm in a tea-cup," said Lancret, and added disconcertingly that Barbet seemed not to have behaved badly in the matter Was it not he who had made the marriage possible? Wasn't Renee's dowry his money? Wasn t it in his cottage they proposed to live? There seemed a certain generosity—

Perhaps you are right, father'

How not?"

I am sure you are right, though there are many in Roussignac who are a little suspicious of so much generosity Why, they ask, after Pierre had quarrelled with him about the incident in the prison, did Barbet give him a different job, take the prison into his own hands produce a dow—

That Victor

"He is of my own family," said Anton

"It would become your duty," Victor repeated "After all, you owe your place to public opinion"

"*Which you provoke?*"

"I have a trifling influence," Victor said in a voice of menacing humility "The priest has more"

"So you have been to Lancret?"

"Bette has spoken to him"

"And you?"

Victor raised his shoulders "If it is necessary You dont understand, Anton It is to your own interest You want the Maison Hazard You want the Cheval Pie I intend no unpleasantness to Barbet When he sees that it is advisable, he will go I wish only to persuade him that it is advisable As for the girl—"

"As for my brother," Anton interrupted "I know him and you don't If you think a hue and cry will drive him out—"

"Stubborn, I admit," Victor conceded

"No Not even stubborn But he won't *hear* your hue and cry Don't you see that? You're so clever, you don't know your man Nor your girl" Anton rubbed his hands "I know women But go to the priest if it amuses you"

Victor went to the priest and, in his presence, was a changed man —a miserable sinner by eager admission, a determined wet lipped penitent, careful to confess always those drier sins by which Lancret personally was least disturbed

The man in Lancret was uneasily aware of being duped as school masters are sometimes aware, without admitting it to their scholastic selves, that they are duped by their favourite pupils, but the priest in him approved Victor s rigid orthodoxy and his refreshing habit of confessing always to something else than lasciviousness Lancret was extremely tired of lasciviousness in men and women, the story was so old, and the less welcome because it had been his own It was re assuring to find in Victor one parishioner whose chastity at any rate might be assumed

When Victor had received absolution he walked to the priest s

"Barbet," he remarked, controlling himself and speaking as coolly as possible, "seems to be very little touched by it all"

"Little touched?" said Victor "I hope so How often do you see Thérèse Despreux?"

The effect of these words on the priest was to fill him with the kind of madness that, in other men, is induced by physical jealousy Thereafter, as long as he remained in Victor's presence, he believed whatever he was told When Victor was gone, he was exhausted, and sat for a long time in his chair, his mouth dry, his eyes hot as though he had been weeping He looked at the chair that Victor had occupied and remembered with disgust the limp drooping of his pointed boot To-morrow, he said to himself, I will go to the Cheval Pie, but, when the morning came, he knew that, in his present mood, he must not encounter Thérèse, and went instead to the Maison Hazard, intending to say that he had come to make final arrangements for Renée's wedding

He found her and Pierre outside the stables in the west courtyard. They were unable to talk quietly even of their own business, and interrupted each other continually in their eagerness to tell, for the hundredth time, what had happened *that* evening Pierre had not been a coward! Renee had never accused him of it! And as for Barbet—whatever he had done or not done, let it be clearly understood that they had no part in it, none. Lancret watched them closely—the flaunting haphazard girl now shrill and fierce against all his knowledge of her character, the slow, inarticulate man spurting a fool's eloquence, and he said to himself They are like people who have seen a ghost and are afraid to admit it.

When Madame Hazard came from the house and joined them, he saw in her a change so remarkable and subtle that he felt almost the panic of a dream This garrulous, downright, pettish old woman was outwardly as she had been, but, in the presence of Renee and Pierre, a defiant exaltation, an air of martyrdom, a pride of Sinai entered into her, so that the priest said This is the spiritual pride that makes repentance impossible, in this mood, even if she were still Catholic, she would throw off the Church But he knew that nine-tenths of human folly consists in playing a part before an audience,

uncharitable a rumour, "is what they say But, after all, when emotion is aroused, people will say anything!"

The priest was already tired of the subject It presented itself to him as a quarrel between the Vincents and the Hazards, the details of which were no concern of his, and he pressed his hands to his eyes as he often did when he was tired

"Of course," said Victor, "if it weren't for the claim, the whole thing would be of no consequence"

"You attach importance to that?"

"I? I personally? Neither I nor you, father, but among ignorant people superstition grows like a weed Will you believe that there are some in Roussignac who cross the street rather than let Barbet's shadow fall on them and others who say that, if he touched them, they would be cured of their rheumatism? His own mother says that, when she dies her son will raise her from the dead"

Lancret heard this with reluctance Himself a man in whom passion was imprisoned but alive, he dreaded enthusiasm in others It fired his trail, it endangered his self discipline If only mankind and particularly his parishioners, would obey the simple rules of conduct and faith, how much easier life would be! He had known that there was scandal brewing but had shut his eyes to it In the confessional he had received evidence of it and still had done nothing The claim that Barbet had worked a miracle was preposterous and yet—and yet Victor's grave words his correct manner, his whole air of giving the alarm without being himself alarmed, worked on the priest like a crumb in his shirt He distrusted Victor, he was too smooth, too humble, too discreet, but in face of a man so reasonable and so orthodox he had not the courage of his own distrust

"As always," Victor continued, choosing his words as a woman chooses the silks for her embroidery as always on these occasions when the religious sense overflows its permitted channels it becomes an emotional flood Women—young women particularly—fear or hate or worship Barbet I have heard you say yourself, father, that heresy is often rooted in sex"

Lancret was trapped He recognized the saying as his own All that he loved least in himself fiercely endorsed it

"I asked you—and we were talking of your son—whether you considered that Thérèse was good?"

Madame Hazard ceased to laugh She stooped to the ground for a stone and put it into his hand

"There is Barbet, working at his barrels," she said, looking across the courtyard to where Barbet and Quessot were to be seen through an open door "Ask him, monsieur le cure," and the priest, clutching the stone, made off There was no way by which he might go home without passing the cooper's shed, but he intended to go by with no more than a nod—perhaps without turning his head. An angry bitterness entangled him—the bitterness of having seen with his own eyes the power that Barbet had upon the people with whom he lived His own mind was divided, he had no power to strike a spark from the world or to affect men and women as Barbet affected them, he had failed as man and as priest. Barbet might be a simpleton, but for him the spark flew! Madame Hazard had become another being He would not forget the happiness, like a reflected light, on that crumpled, ridiculous face When he had asked whether she condemned Therese, first she had laughed at him, then had given him a stone Why? What did the stone mean? He held it out '*Qui sine peccato est vestrum, primus in illam lapidem mittat*" He spoke the words aloud, then tilted his hand and let the stone fall

Barbet called out to him from the shed "Come in for a moment, and Renée shall bring us a glass of wine." The priest's anger left him he felt happy again and smiled and went into the great shed After he had spoken to Quessot, who was one of his flock, and had refused the offer of wine, he was given a stool, and sat down with his feet among the shavings of Limousin oak. Quessot was binding hoops at the farther end of the shed, Barbet was swinging the chip-axe in short even arcs and Lancret, soothed by the craftsmanship that could command to accuracy so awkward a tool, was content to watch silently

"You're not ill?" Barbet asked.

Ill?"

Out there you looked wretched You looked what I felt when I was a boy at school and was behind with my lessons 'I'll never

and he sent Renée and Pierre about their business "Now," he said to Madame Hazard, "what have you on your mind? I came as a friend to talk to you of Barbet, but I'd rather listen than talk" At this the old lady became quiet at once Looking straight at Lancret out of unblinking eyes, she answered "He is good, monsieur le curé, he is good—that is all"

There was such a finality in this reply that the priest would gladly have put no more questions to her, but he explained that he felt it to be his duty, for the sake of his own flock and to prevent scandal in his parish, to ask whether she did indeed claim for her son miraculous powers and whether she believed, as some had told him, that, when she died, Barbet would raise her from the dead She said, as if she were speaking to a dressmaker about a ribbon, "It isn't important," and added "He is good," as though, in the three words, were all the gospels

There is nothing more she will say, the priest thought, than those three words, certainly she is mad, but as the word "mad" formed in his mind he looked into her face and remembered what had been said of heretics before her Never in any face had he seen a more unassailable, a more aggressive happiness It enraged him with envy and righteousness Aggressive, aggressive, he repeated, gazing at the serenity of this petulant, foolish, ignorant woman, and to break her quiet as his was broken, he asked her whether she supposed that Therese also was "good"

"Thérèse? But why? There are two sorts of people," she said, patting the priest on the shoulder as though he were a schoolboy who asked a silly but forgivable question, "there are two sorts of people who will always be afraid of Thérèse Despreux women who aren't tempted and priests who are And there is one sort who will always loathe her—such men as Victor Vincent who cannot enjoy women O la! la! she has her faults! But at any rate she hasn't the face of a horse and the body of a camel"

This oblique reference to Madame Vincent so delighted the old lady that she laughed and flapped her hands until water came into her eyes Lancret, confused and indignant, stood before her with fists clenched

'I asked you—and we were talking of your son—whether you considered that Thérese was good?'

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Ill?"

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catch up! I'll never catch up! I'm in a tangle and can't get out! I shall never understand anything again as long as I live!"

"Tell me," the priest said, "what is your own opinion about what is called the 'incident in the prison'?"

"I think," Barbet answered, "people bother their heads too much with 'why?' and 'how?' and 'what will the consequence be? I have no more *opinion* about it than I have about the grapes on a vine."

"But was it a miracle?"

"Are the grapes?"

"But people are saying that it was, and you don't deny it."

"Ah well," said Barbet, "if it was a miracle, it wasn't mine. Nor are the grapes, though I grow them."

Lancret was delighted to watch Barbet at work. His own angers were appeased in this tranquil, unprovocative company. A stave was held out for his inspection when Barbet had finished paring it.

"Why do you ask me?" Lancret asked with a smile.

"I've always shown things to you. I can't do it as Quesnot does, you know. Oak is like cheese to him."

The priest nodded. "Will you answer another question? What do you feel about Thérèse?"

"I love her," Barbet replied.

Lancret had expected any answer but this, but it appeared now to have been the only possible and complete answer, so full of truth that there was no room in it for evil.

"I shall not trouble you with questions," he said, "or interrupt your work, but I should like, if I may, to sit here a little while."

Barbet put down his chip-axe, momentarily surprised. "But certainly."

"*You see,*" *the priest continued,* "*you have a way of making a man feel that he is not his own enemy. A woman too, perhaps.* Is that, I wonder, what happened in the prison? ... No, I would rather you didn't stop. I should like you to go on with your work."

Chapter 10

ON THE DAY OF PIERRE AND RENÉE'S MARRIAGE, all Roussignac went to drink their health at the Maison Hazard, but Thérèse did not go In the late afternoon, the company streamed out across Barbet's vineyards, followed the bride and bridegroom to the cottage in which henceforth they would live. Frédéric, forgetting that he was an invalid, joined in the songs, and returned to the Cheval Pie happy and full of news. But Thérèse did not wish to hear it; she felt herself excluded from local festivities by her father's presence, the impossibility that he should acknowledge her, his frozen greetings that struck at the root of her life "Did the priest sing?" she demanded with a fierceness that Frédéric did not understand. "Did he join in the dances? . Now, listen. I am going to give a performance in the prison Have you forgotten that? There are things to be done. Get a pencil and write them down"

Frédéric had never found life more difficult than on the day chosen for this performance There could be no concert at the Cheval Pie that evening, but all the thirst of Roussignac would not transfer itself to the Lion Rouge, customers would come and must be served, and Frédéric had found an old man and a lanky boy to serve them During the day he had laboured to show these understudies how everything was to be managed while he and Thérèse were absent. Thérèse disliked them instantly, or swore she did If no one better could be found, she herself would stay; she would not go to the prison at all! "Then Monsieur Barbet must be warned," said Frédéric to test her. "Shall I go at once to the Maison Hazard and tell them you won't come? What excuse shall I give?"

"Excuse? None."

But she did not tell him to go. Instead, she looked away from

Frédéric and said "I'm sorry I'm making everything harder for you . But the old man is like a moth-eaten blackbird and that boy you've found has crawled out from under a stone I'm sorry" Then she threw up her head "Why do I always find myself doing things I don't want to do? Monsieur Barbet! Monsieur Barbet! There's too much Barbet His songs, his music—now, his audience! Nothing is *mine*"

"I think he's kind," Frédéric said "And patient You are glad at first to have new songs written for you"

"So I am Of course I am I know which side my bread is buttered It's not that"

"Well, what is it?" asked Frédéric

"Oh, I'll go," she exclaimed "I always do what I don't want Don't you worry"

Frédéric put down the last of the glasses he had been wiping and shook out his dish-cloth

"That's how you make yourself unhappy," he said 'That's how you wear yourself out—and everyone else too I shall die soon," he added with the bleak solemnity of a youth old before his time, "and when I'm dead you'll never be really great—you mark my words—you'll never have peace until—"

"I don't want peace!"

"You want it more than anyone I have ever known You want it so much that you are afraid of it" He flung himself at her feet, seized her hand and rubbed his cheek against it Then, as she moved in response, he looked up at her like a dog and shouted with a fierceness made ridiculous by his sobs "And now all you are thinking is 'Shall I be gracious to this grovelling fool or shall I jump up like an angry queen and send him sprawling? Which part shall I play?' You ask yourself that," he continued, 'because I don't exist for you No one does You think of everyone on earth as someone watching you And then you say you aren't selfish! You think you're generous! In a way, it's true But you give what you want to give and when it amuses you to give it"

She made him stand up and gazed at him with admiration His

anger subdued and warmed her Instead of flying into an opposite rage she submitted herself to this pale blubbering prophet

"You said I should never be really great until—until what?

O God said Frederic, until you can be ordinary and kind Until someone who is in trouble comes to you tired and dull useless to you and you give him safety and put him into your own bed and let him sleep

What did he mean? she asked herself as she and Frédéric walked up through the woods to the Maison Hazard Give him safety let him sleep

Frederic what did you mean?

Though she did her best to recall it to him Frederic had forgotten this part of their conversation

Did I say that?

"Of course you did! About someone who came to me in trouble. Who? It doesn t make sense.

I don t know Whatever it was it seemed to make sense at the time."

Heavens above! Therese exclaimed Do you live in a trance? Who are you? Ezekiel?

Frederic shouldered the mandolin and went forward She could call him what she liked—Ezekiel if it pleased her, though what she meant by this he hadn t an idea He was listening to her footsteps in the dark wood behind him She was alive and near him He drew on to his palate the cool evening air which told him that he also was alive.

In Madame Hazard s parlour Therese s heart failed her She had imagined that she would sing to the prisoners only but others had been allowed to come. She felt that they were hostile to her and that only at Barbet s insistence had she been admitted to the house Pierre and Renee she had *expected to find but* Madame Vincent was there, forbidding and monumental and among the faces in the room Thérèse saw those of Victor and Hurtaux and of

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"So I am. Of course I am. I know which side my bread is buttered. It's not that."

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the priest, her father At once, she was at bay Madame Hazard's chattering kindliness presented itself to her as patronage, she froze and snapped back, gripping her hands together so tightly that the muscles of her upper arms began to tremble like taut wire Her mouth was set, the lower lip a little protruded, her face grew pale her eyes startled and defensive Suddenly she felt cold and sick, and sat in an upright chair, her body stiffly erect

"If you will come now, I will take you into the courtyard"

She followed Barbet along the covered way and through the passage with two doors, Frédéric trailing behind her

"Why have you brought me here now?" she said "Before the others come?"

"I wanted you to see how everything was arranged We brought your platform up safely but the grass of the courtyard isn't very smooth We had to pack one corner with a piece of wood Will you try it? Make sure it's firm Dance on it"

Frédéric seated himself at the piano that stood beside the platform She danced a few steps.

"It will do"

"And here's a tent we have rigged up for you out of an old sail A dressing room—if you need one Not very grand Table, mirror, chair, lamp I thought it would be better than a spare cell—nearer to the stage"

"Thank you" She leaned on the back of the chair "I suppose the prisoners have been watching us from their cells?"

"Why?"

"I thought I saw faces"

"Probably As soon as I have brought in the others from the house, I shall let them out There are chairs for them under the ilex"

"Let them out now"

"You would be alone with them while I was away—you and Frédéric"

"You are afraid of that?"

"I? No"

"Let them out, then"

'What is it? Do you want to talk to them?'

'I shall stay in this tent. I shan't say a word."

Without pressing for a reason, he did as she wished. From within the tent, she heard the prisoners' voices as they came across the dusky courtyard and settled in their places under the tree. It was dark in the tent, she needed the lamp to arrange the half-dozen shawls and aprons that were her wardrobe and to prepare her face. "And you had better make sure," she said to Frédéric, "that the lamps on the platform will burn."

'They will burn all right."

'Well try them. Why so sure?"

"Monsieur Barbet has his head screwed on. There are extra lamps as well as our own—better than ours, with ribbed reflectors."

'I want them all tested," said Therèse. "If you don't do a thing yourself, it is never done."

Frédéric raised his eyebrows and obeyed. When he was gone, Therèse had no more commands to give, and, her face being finished, nothing to do but wait. Loneliness fell upon her like an icy mist, as it had long ago when she overheard her mother say, not angrily but with careful meaning: "The child ought not to have been born." She felt again, now, that she was outcast from the world, disinherited of its natural affections, a bastard, a priest's daughter—anyone's woman, the music master's, Hurtaux's if he could get her—above all a fighter against odds, and her spirit flew to her bitterness as a fighter's hand to his weapon. Mankind was a pack from which she was excluded, a vast audience of strangers hungry for her downfall. She would fight and enslave them, she would not play down to them or be pretty for their sakes. The mirror gave back rosy cheeks under the eyes' fierceness. She wiped the colour away, even from her lips, and with two upward strokes enlarged her eyes.

Barbet looked into her tent to say that all was ready.

"Tell Frédéric to begin."

What shall you sing?"

He knows.'

Barbet stood still. 'What have you done, Therèse?'

"Done? Taken off some of my make up." She was standing

The shadow of a tent cord lay across her cheek and forehead like the scar of a whip, and her hands were clasped behind her.

"It's as though you had a knife hidden there," Barbet said

She raised her shoulders and thrust her lips forward. "I'll do my job," she said "Do I get a drink when it's over?"

She began with the fiercest of all her songs:

"As I was walking up the street
Under the lamps, under the sky,"

—a song that Barbet had composed of the loneliness of great cities and that she had converted to her own use. It had become for her the story not of a countrywoman remembering the earth's fruitfulness and the little incidents and festivals of her home, but a recognition at once embittered and lascivious, of the greed and barren profit of a town. Praises of the country she twisted to ridicule, recollections of childhood to hypocrisies that were to be laughed at. The song had an edge of cruelty, of scorn for mankind and for herself, which, when it was sung as she sang it now—with a mask-like face and an insatiable hunger in the wide, penetrating eyes—made her rhythm the rhythm of a lash, and, feeling her audience, made raw by imprisonment, quiver beneath her attack, she allowed a delight of power to appear in the cumulative gesture of her body, her whole being to take light She flashed herself into these men's eyes, estimating her strength by their excitement and by the provoked pleasure which, in them, was indistinguishable from suffering Never had an audience been so vulnerable Their applause was a cackle, a scream, a prolonged turbulence like the boiling of a cauldron, and often, during the songs that followed, she heard them shudder and sigh as though collectively they were her lover and were spent in her seizure of them The women gazed at her stupefied, except Madame Vincent who, to prove that she was incapable of a boor's astonishment, nodded her great head, and beat time with her left hand, and continued to nod and beat until the movement of hand and head became the beat and nod of an automaton Victor hugged his sides, determined to give no visible response to Thérèse, but now

and then the thin pale wedge of his face shifted and his hand went up to it and wiped it, a sweat had broken out upon his skin Her father, Lancret, had curved his arms over the back of the chair he sat in, his wrists hung loose, his chin was down, she saw only his forehead, and a body crumpled like a sack, and yet knew that under his brows his upturned eyes were watching her as they might have watched her at the stake

She did not look at Barbet, but shut him out from her knowledge, for this was the moment of her pride, she felt the devil's endowment upon her, and it was of all things necessary that she should despise and make negligible in her heart the man who had surrendered his work to her That this might be certain, she needed, in so visible an audience, a point of focus for eyes and mind, and chose Blachère, swinging her regard across the others—across the abject stare of old Marcotte, whose saliva hung string like from a sagging jaw, across the agonized and perverted idealism of Fontan's drifting eyes—sweeping them inward and inward to the centre that was Blachère With him she had established so intimate a contact that she was able to draw that bladder of a face through the distance of tree from platform and to make him feel that she was leaning over him, her breath upon him her scent in his nostrils

There could be no interval In the need to exhaust herself she sang on and on, to piano and to mandolin, aware increasingly that the night sky, the ilex, the courtyard were an ever-shrinking frame and that in the concentration of her own mind her hearers were trapped She despised them for their submission as though they were dogs fawning upon her for the meat she threw, and suddenly pitied them because their submission was to the animalism in herself She pitied and in the instant, could no longer command them. Her concentration broke. She saw for the first time Barbet's eyes, they looked at her [illegible] stopped singing [illegible] She dragged at [illegible] the tune that it might give the words to her and drove the song to its end

The audience shifted She had lost them and lost even the will to recapture them by the means she had hitherto employed Her

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his determination failed, but he made virtue of the failure and would have laid down his arms in the extreme piety of non resistance Then looking about him, he saw that whatever part of nature man had not defiled—the birds, the sky, the undamaged crops—were continuous and unswerving in their lives, and he said How to kill is not the question nor how not to kill, but how to live simply and with acceptance so that no work of man shall have power to separate me from the peace of God, nor the peace of God to withdraw me from the joy and suffering of man And he continued in arms, neither as martyr nor as rebel, as he would have continued in peace if that had been his destiny

Barbet had written this song in short rhyming verses, roughly shaped, as a colloquial ballad Sometimes the soldier spoke his own thoughts, sometimes to others, the progress of his march was implied in the changing incidents and encounters of the roadside, and it was possible to sing the song to give an impression either that he was a chattering yokel confused in mind, the butt of his companions, or that he was a countryman, expelled from the province of his content, but of natural gaiety and courage Thérese sang it now with compassion for him, as though his life were her own The trudging agony of the march was in the sag of her body as she began, and his tormented revolt against his condition in her haunted and sullen tone. When even his hatred forsook him and he would have thrown away his arms in despair of fate, her dulled insistence on a failing rhythm carried in it the *footfall of* a man *doomed* and his sense of being herded into exile from sanity and justice. But when she lifted her head and saw the birds in their independence and touched the [illegible]

[illegible] communicative repose that none can learn, as the voice and hearing of the soldier and his companions, as a mediator between him and those natural endurances by which acceptance comes to mankind While she sang, she knew for the first time—not what Barbet had intended by the song, for this she had long known and in her arrogance perverted—but the spontaneous bliss in him that the song expressed, and she drew the prisoners

being had turned over in its sleep and awakened She was aware of the footlights shining up into her face and that some of the reflectors were ribbed, the others plain. The scene extended before her, not only to the gleam of Frédéric's white notes and the point of fire in Madame Hazard's amethyst, but to the woods, and the long, rambling path to Roussignac and the river. In all these things she herself had no part They were not, as they had been, a setting for her emotion, nor was the audience a market for her talent The desire to fight, to rule, to assert and magnify her individuality was gone. She did not understand the change in her, nor its origin With a gesture that Hurtaux mistook for a struggle to remember her words, she covered her face, imagining that she lay in a remote part of the Long Wood, as once she had when a child, the earth and the charity of life enfolding her, the stress and agony of her inescapable self annihilated at last in a breathless quiet and in her hands' darkness

"Look," said Victor, "she's played herself to a finish"

"Do you think so?" Hurtaux replied "Unless I'm mistaken there's more in her than that"

Her fingers opened She observed them nodding together, examined her attitude with their eyes, and dropped her hands

Seeing below her Frédéric's drawn face and the audience like boles of wood, she compelled the muscles of her body to relax, drew breath and prepared to sing A compassionate desire was in her to affect her audience in a new way, but it was unfamiliar and she fought against it What are you, Thérèse Despreux? Are you mad? A saint? A nun? Who is to be in the cage—you or they? If you do not dominate them, they will trample you, and if, now, you sing with compassion for mankind it is a trick you play on them—not softness in you, not a denial of the saving hatreds, but a trick, a new beguilement of the hated, a new trap laid against fear! She raised her eyes in challenge and prepared her lips for bitterness, but, when she had begun to sing, the nature of her singing was changed

It was a song, recalled from Barbet's experience as a soldier, of a man who went into battle full of pride and fear, determined to take vengeance of blood upon the world that had brought him to this pass It was his fear that gave him courage, and, when he knew this,

You mean that?"

'Firmly'

'Where?

"Bordeaux Lyons Paris'

Ah!" she said 'You think you mean it to-night We will talk of it in the morning"

They hesitated. She said again in a tone of dismissal "We will talk of it in the morning"

When they were gone, she cried "Frédéric! Frédéric! Where is Monsieur Barbet now?'

But it was the priest who entered

"Tell me, my child Something changed you Something happened'

She would admit nothing "I'm learning my job," she said

into her lightness of heart and sang many songs and danced for them so that now they were in awe, now laughing, now rapt in her adventure, until at last she sang again the song with which she had begun

As I was walking up the street
Under the lamps, under the sky,

but plainly, without bitterness or sentiment, with no accent of opinion, as though she were singing to children a song that they had heard a thousand times before

She was gone from the platform before their silence broke, and would not return In her dressing-tent, she sat before her mirror, her hands on her knees, her nostrils distended by her breathing

Frédéric came "Monsieur Barbet asks if he may see you"

She shook her head "Not yet" But Hurtaux thrust away the flap Victor was at his side

"I want to say—" Hurtaux began

Victor seized his arm "You're mad, Hurtaux! You will give everything away You are not intelligent"

"Mademoiselle," said Hurtaux, disregarding his companion, "you are—you could become a great diseuse I offer you a contract"

Thérèse did not answer

"Did you hear me? What are you doing, mademoiselle?"

"My breathing exercises"

"Now?"

"Now"

"I offer you a contract"

She threw back at him her old challenge "Not for money Not for a contract"

"I tell you, I offer you a contract"

"For services within the contract?"

He smiled "For services within the contract"

"No more?"

"None"

"Why?" she said "You astonish me Am I so ugly?"

He patted her shoulder "I will tell you," he answered "Because I shall make money out of you"

of the earth of Roussignac and—bring me camellias when I die"

After this oration of which, at the time, she was extremely proud, they gathered about her, shook her hand, laughed and kissed her In the more susceptible eyes there were tears, and she persuaded herself that there could be no audience on earth so understanding as this. Was she a fool to leave them? Her confidence was shaken as it always was by the taking of any decisive step She felt that her contract with Hurtaux, which an hour ago she had considered a masterpiece of negotiation, was less good than it should have been She had been cheated, she wished to retract Why had she no man who would act for her—no agent to make bargains as other women had? But when she imagined such an agent, she instantly distrusted him and was sure that she could do her business better herself

Not until the courtyard was emptied and she saw Barbet approaching across the square did she remember that she had promised to go out with him that night in his boat, and at once she had no thought but of how she might avoid her promise He would be kind to her and forbearing, at long intervals he would say things that enchanted her by their straightforwardness, but to-night he would certainly talk about her work This she dreaded, for she was fond of him, and she knew that, whenever he spoke of her work, she intuitively, and against her will, ranged herself for battle, saying at random and in a tone of angry conviction, things which she ceased to believe when they had passed her lips She could force herself to agree with him but there was a devil in her by which it was made impossible that she should equably discuss with him any subject arising from her *own art*, and necessary that she should spurn every suggestion of his. He had a habit of penetrating too far, of disturbing her assurances The truth came from him with an inward authority that would have subjugated her if she had not instantly defied it, and she defied it against friendship and reason as a fierce and timid cat strikes at the gentlest of hands

Barbet,' she said as he came up to her, 'I m tired to-night I didn t know I should be I'm sorry I brought you so far"

"Then I ll leave this song" he answered calmly, taking a roll of

Chapter 11

WHAT VICTOR COULD NOT HAVE IN ONE WAY, HE would have in another As soon as he knew certainly that Thérese intended a contract with Hurtaux and to leave the Cheval Pie, he consulted with his sister, Bette Thérèse's going by her own choice must weaken their hand Scandal would die away, they could not now so easily drive Barbet from his home

"The Maison Hazard, I am afraid, is in the future, my dear Bette," Victor said, "but the Cheval Pie is yours for the asking"

It was true Faced by the prospect of Therese's going, Madame Sernet knew that she could no longer run the inn and was glad to sell It was Thérese herself who, by delaying the signature of her contract with Hurtaux, enabled the old woman to hold out for a price "Pay what I ask or I shall stay where I am," said Thérèse, and Victor believed her because one believes what one most fears to believe The price was low and Anton paid it, consenting also to maintain Fréderic in his employment 'After all," said Victor, 'he will soon be dead Meanwhile he can play the piano"

On the evening of the day on which her contract with Hurtaux was signed, Therese, after her concert, made a speech to her audience.

"Mesdames, Messieurs I shall not sing here again To-morrow I prepare for my journey On the next day I go to Bordeaux Soon I shall be in Paris Come to see me there Perhaps I shall need an audience. Do not stare at the posters and say 'Therèse Despreux She is the girl who sang at Roussignac" and turn away Perhaps I shall be poor, very poor, poorer than I am here Paris is a great city Perhaps by then I shall be lonely In any case, you are the only friends I have in the world It will be you who have given me Paris Mesdames, Messieurs, I shall be glad to see you Bring me a little

had turned up-river away from the town and she said "Where's your boat? Isn't she with the others by the bridge wharf?"

"I brought her up to the deep pool," Barbet said "The birds roost there."

The boat was drawn up in a shallow creek They pushed her out with oars driven into the ground. Reeds scraped against her sides and bent stubbornly in the crutches, but at last she made her way through them and swam clear with so sudden a movement that Barbet was thrown off his balance A stumble against the thwart knocked away his feet, the oar he held with his left hand twisted its blade in the boat s under suck and dragged him outward He would have been in the water if Thérese had not with both hands grasped his struggling forearm and wrenched him out of the air

The starlings asleep among the reeds near by rose with a whirl and clatter of wings, a multitudinous shriek of wings and voices as though the air were calico and they tearing it

'It's not often," said Barbet, 'that I can get clear without disturbing them I had to-night, until that happened . Thank you, Therèse Have we lost an oar?'

'I caught that too" She was breathless and frightened "You would have been drowned, she said

"It s not deep yet"

"That s why You'd have been caught in the weeds and the mud I should have been waiting for you to come up But you wouldn't have come You'd have been stifling now in the mud and the reeds and I should have been kneeling in the boat, peering out --nothing to see, only ripples close in--it's too dark--and everyone would have said--'

'What?

'They couldn t prove it but they'd think it. No one gives me the benefit of the doubt '

'Why should anyone suppose you wished to kill me? Aren't we known to be friends?'

"That isn t the word Victor uses, or Renée and Pierre, or Bette--"

'Victor," Barbet answered, ' is the unhappiest man I know Un-

paper from under his arm "Put it in your trunk You can look at it when you are settled in Bordeaux"

"And you?"—for she was never able to credit his acceptances

"I shall go on the river for a little while"

' Even if I'm not there?"

"You will be," he said, "in one way or another You have often been there when you didn't know it, and in the vineyards—even in the prison Now I won t keep you You are tired Good night, Thérese You have signed with Hurtaux?'

"This afternoon"

"I hope it turns out to be a fortunate day for you"

"It is the twenty fifth of July Twenty-five is my lucky number"

She turned into the house and, going to her room, said half seriously to herself If I don t go with him to-night, shall I be un lucky at Bordeaux? He is my mascot, perhaps

Then, as a penance for so much egoism, she knelt at her bed side in the position of one about to repeat her prayers

"Pater noster " she began, but her eye fell on a pattern of the quilt that reminded her of an albatross An albatross was not a good omen She rose quickly and kicked off her shoes Her candle was set down on the wooden chair beside her bed and she undid the neck of her dress Suddenly she was still and cold

If I don't see him to-night, I shall not see him again Now or never That was the Albatross!

She ran downstairs and into the wood at the back of the house. He was leaning on one of the bridges that spanned the stream, and seemed to have been waiting for her

The path was so dark among the trees—a thin moon and the stars being overclouded—that they had difficulty in making their way Neither had brought a lamp, and on the rough ground Barbet stumbled and had to seize a branch to steady himself ' I know the path," Thérese said "Let me go in front" She slid past him in the darkness and he felt her hand close over his At the edge of the little wood they could see more easily and soon were in the open She released his hand and walked beside him along the tow path He

She crawled into the bows, lay upon her face and looked out over the stern of the boat. By her guess in the darkness, they were still far from the shore. Barbet judged his distance and gave four powerful strokes, then ceased, and boated his oars that there might be no sound of their feather on the surface. The boat glided in under its own way. The chuckle ceased under the quarters, the bow wave dropped, the gleam of water fell more and more slowly astern. There was a creaking of reeds, against them, the boat brought up.

"Pull her in a little by hand," Barbet whispered. And when he had been obeyed: "Enough. Let her swing to the gap."

They were enclosed by reeds, the sky clear above them, the stars weakening. The nearest swallows awoke but gave no alarm; there was a shifting of wings, a brief, inquiring conversation, then silence again.

Barbet pointed upwards. "Day coming," he said.

Therese opened her eyes, which she had closed at the flutter of wings. Beside her a reed was curved against the sky by the weight of roosting swallows. The line of illumination, which alone at first defined it, broadened as the light grew, the whole reed became visible, and the swallows changed from iron to bronze. *In two nights* she would be at Bordeaux; she let her hand sink until the water was a bracelet about her wrist. A swallow left the reed on which he was perched and dropped upon another nearer to her, disturbing its occupants and bringing up all their heads in protest. She and he watched each other until her hand was cold and she withdrew it from the water to dry in the warm air, and fell asleep.

When she awoke, the swallows too were astir. They preened themselves and chattered before setting out on their voyage. As they took flight, reed after reed swayed up against the sky, and suddenly, screaming to one another, the starlings were away. Company after company of birds rose into the air. Therèse, watching them, heard in imagination the early traffic of Bordeaux under her window and the clash of pails in the courtyard of the unknown house where she would lodge, and th

tranquil expec

happier even than Blachère" He began to row into lighter water, beyond the shadow of the trees.

"If I hadn't come, you'd have been dead," said Thérèse.

"But I can swim!"

She was furious "I tell you you'd have been dead! I saw an albatross That was why I came"

This had no meaning for him and he made no answer

"Well," she exclaimed, "don't you want to *know* about my albatross? You ought to want to know about my albatross when I've saved your life" And after a pause she said, quietly and seriously "I believe I did, you know"

"What?"

"Save your life"

He pulled on cheerfully Then, resting on his oars "I think you did Thank you, Thérèse"

"Oh, well," she said with a sigh, "you don't really believe it and never will, I know that I wish you believed me I wish people gave me credit for the real things I do and not for the things they pretend about me I'm not a good woman I'm no use to any man I *use* them I can't be trusted I lie and lie I always shall But I'm quick I don't stand about wringing my hands I pulled you out of the air I have strong fingers and wrists Feel them Now may I lie down in the bottom of the boat and go to sleep if I want to? Oh, I'm so glad I came I'm so glad I'm glad I saved your life too or you wouldn't be here to row the boat!"

"I believe I amuse you," said Barbet

"Do you mind?"

"I like it You are gentle when people amuse you in that way—when you feel you're older than they are"

"Am I so fierce?"

"Listen," he said "Don't talk for a while I want to go up to the deep pool and nose in among the reeds very quietly without putting up the birds Some of them are restless now Listen"

"Starlings?"

"Swallows Starlings live next door"

"You say you love me. How do you love me? As you love the prisoners? I believe you love all mankind!" she continued with irony and tenderness "Is that how you love me?" She looked at him for a long time. "O my God," she said at last. "I believe it's true I don't want to believe it I believe you do love me What's the good of your loving me? I'm no good to any man except as—"

"That's not the point," said Barbet

"Have you never lain with a woman?"

'Oh yes I'm a very ordinary man. . And I love you—you yourself—"

"That s what I'm asking," she said "Why me in particular?'

"You open windows for me."

"Is that true?" she said "Is it?"

After an interval Barbet continued "Just now you said something that puzzled me. When I wanted to go back, you said 'That always comes. The odd thing is, it needn't' What did you mean?"

She stretched her arms above her head and yawned "I had been thinking of Bordeaux, and of your prison *I must* go there, you *must* go to the Maison Hazard Must! Why—must? If you had been drowned, what then? And if I disappeared, who would be a sou the worse? Suppose to-night we didn't go back, but landed on the other bank and walked across the hill there, and never came back, suppose—"

"That's what I call making voyages," he said

"Well?"

'Until this moment, had you imagined it?"

"No '

"Then it's fancy It's not imagination It doesn't mean anything It would be just running away," Barbet said.

'Acting," said Therese. "For me. Not for you"

"Yes," he answered. "At this moment it would be acting—even for me."

"Then I have no power over you What you said isn't true—that I can open windows for you! But I saved your life," she cried

saw the flaked plaster of a ceiling and the rusted knob of an iron bed One morning soon there would be the unshaven chin of a stranger on her pillow and an open mouth She would hesitate to wake him, while he gaped there, she would not have to pretend, even to herself, that she had any interest in him He was a man, and she needed men At night she could be selective, but in the morning they were chin and mouth

"Shall you come here often in the mornings?" she asked "I wish I can't help it It's like drink, I suppose"

This also had no meaning for him "I think," he said, "it's time we were starting back"

"That always comes The odd thing is, it needn't"

When they were clear of the reeds and on the open river, she said "I want half an hour"

For an instant he hesitated, then turned the bows against the stream and used the oars only to check the drift

"Barbet," she said, "that night at the prison, when I was singing, what did you do?"

"Do? Nothing"

"But I sang differently I felt different I was different I didn't fight any more And now, with you, I don't want to Was what you did to me what you did to the prisoners that evening when they went back to their cells—was it?"

"Whatever was done, you did inside yourself, Thérèse I didn't do it Have you got it in your head that I'm a miracle worker?"

"But you were there"

"Yes I was there"

"Well!"

"If I'm of any use to you, Thérèse, I expect it's because I love you"

"*And* the prisoners?" she cried Oh, it's the old story, I suppose Everyone who says they love you wants to change you And if they succeed, they don't love you any more Are you reforming a tart?"

"Whoever loves you wants you not to hate yourself That's all, I think"

Chapter 12

EVEN IN THE VINEYARDS THAT ESCAPED THE PHYLLOXERA, there was a poor vintage that year, but from one source or another the shippers still contrived to supply their customers and the house of Hazard and Vincent prospered. To their annoyance, Barbet seldom sold his brandy to them or to any firm in Roussignac. He had a connexion in Paris and preferred to sell direct to merchants there. Often he acted for a group of the smaller proprietors in his neighbourhood, selling their product with his own, charging them no commission and saving them the profits of the Roussignac middlemen. For this reason, as the phylloxera spread and the supplies of genuine cognac fell away, it became increasingly important for Anton to gain control of the Maison Hazard, for this would carry with it indirectly control of the smaller producers for whom Barbet was accustomed to act. But for the time being Anton was content. What cognac he had to sell he could sell at good prices and his other interests served him well. With Therese's going, the business of the Cheval Pie slackened, but it yielded Anton a moderate interest on its cost, and takings at the Lion Rouge returned to their former health. In any case, the life—one might almost have said the parliament—of the town was drawn back again to his own inn, and Anton, who cared for power more even than for wealth, was satisfied. Indeed, during the autumn he became so benign that he contemplated making up his quarrel with his mother, but she disliked more and more any intrusion into her home and did not encourage him. He and Bette called on her birthday and on other formal occasions. They went for the credit of the family and were received for the same reason. Barbet and his brother seldom met except during these visits or when Barbet called at the mayor's office to collect the money due for his

"That was because I saw an albatross Let me row back . . No, I *want* to row O God," she said, "now it's the end I've been happy to-night What a fool I am Have you been happy too?"

"Yes, I've been happy too "

"And you might have been drowned," she said "The person you have to thank is my *al*batross."

done better to stay at the Cheval Pie where someone would listen to her"

"Did you ever listen to her, Anton?"

"Yes"

"And what did you think? What did you honestly think—you yourself?"

Anton considered "Oh, she has a figure, but I like them blonde, with more flesh on them"

"I meant—as a diseuse."

"Talent," said Anton, "but too—"

"Too what?"

"Too—unexpected I like to know what's coming I like to know where I am She's uncomfortable, that girl. . . ." He looked at Barbet without turning his head. "I hear she has a new lover—so Victor says"

"It didn't need the système Vincent to tell you that," Barbet replied "She has been months away I hear she has had a meal"

The time for Autun's release fell in mid-winter and he was reluctant to go Work would be hard to come by, this wasn't a season to turn a man into the streets, and Barbet was sorry to lose him, for he had taught Autun piquet, a game for which it appeared that he had [illegible] bet told [illegible] It puts a ring round him, he forgets all his complaints against the world, and inside the ring he's extraordinarily skilful."

"I think you ought to give up cards," said Madame Hazard.

"I give up piquet!"

"It isn't consistent."

"With what?"

"With what you are," said his mother solemnly

"You mean—with your idea of me, mother First you make me a saint Now you want me to be a martyr That will never do"

She consented to smile because he laughed, but she was not satisfied

"You know," he continued, "it's not only Autun Everyone has

prisoners' upkeep Sometimes Anton appeared at the Maison Hazard as local deputy for the inspector of prisons who came seldom, but though he glanced at the accounts and signed them, he had never thought it necessary, under Barbet's eye, to visit the prisoners themselves Barbet gave him a glass of wine and they discussed the death of Gambetta

"Do you wish to visit the prisoners?" Barbet asked

Anton shrugged his shoulders "I'll take your word for them And it's my opinion," he added, "that you treat them too well How much are you out of pocket by them?"

"Not much Chiefly at piquet They can't pay their losses, you see"

Anton frowned "I suppose none of them has asked to see me?"

"Oh no," Barbet admitted with a smile. "But you know that strictly you oughtn't to ask me that"

"Now, now, now!" Anton exclaimed heartily, slapping him on the back, "you leave me to know my own business! There's no need for me to be poking my nose into their cells, asking for trouble I hate whining I hate complaints It's pleasant here in the sun The end of autumn's the best time of the year Anyone due for release?"

"Autun before long"

"You will notify me of that"

"But certainly"

"Good," said Anton, and added abruptly "What has happened to that girl?"

"Thérèse? She was still at Bordeaux when last I heard"

"She writes to you?"

"Two letters The last was some time ago She's not a prolific writer She prefers talking"

With his little finger Anton hoisted a fly out of his wine and flicked it on to the grass "A good riddance if you ask me Is she doing well, did you gather?"

"She said 'well enough' But I wonder a little"

"You may If there'd been success to report, she would have told us about it Such a flourish of trumpets! Hurtaux wasn't good enough for her Wasn't she going to conquer Paris? She'd have

Chapter 13

IN THE EARLY MONTHS OF 1884, BARBET SPENT more and more of his time with the prisoners.

"You have not brought me any more tunes lately," said Fontan, and Barbet answered that perhaps they would come with the spring

"And the girl?" Fontan asked

"There is no news of her except that she has left Bordeaux"

"At the inn where she lived—don't they know about her there?"

"While she was in Bordeaux, she used to send money at intervals—sometimes more, sometimes less—what she could afford, I suppose—sometimes to the old woman Sernet, more often to Frédéric. It comes no more"

Barbet did not wish to talk of Therese. Victor said she had quarrelled with Hurtaux and gone to Paris in a huff "She scrambled into the night train as it was going out of the station," was Victor's end to the story, and when Barbet himself made a journey to Angoulême, having heard that Therese's employer was to be found there, Hurtaux would at first tell nothing except that his clients at Bordeaux had not liked her style and that she had refused to change it. But I will say this for her," he added in a burst of confidence, a wide grin spreading over his face. "From Paris she sent me the penalty on her contract. Not a large sum Notes in an envelope with a scribble on a piece of paper, but more than I ever thought to recover"

"I should like to see the scribble," said Barbet politely, "—if you will allow me?"

Hurtaux produced it from the portfolio he carried in his breast pocket A large sheet of hand made paper was spread on the table between them. "I can see her," said Hurtaux, "going into a sta-

something they can be single minded about Often it's a trivial thing like piquet—a game of some kind With Fontan it's music. With Therese—"

"You are still thinking about her?"

This conversation alarmed Madame Hazard, but her alarm was short lived, for afterwards, when Barbet spoke of Thérèse, he spoke so calmly that his mother's anxiety was appeased, but she began to be a little disappointed that he worked no more miracles

"Nevertheless, my dear Emilie, he has the power," she told Madame Vincent "That I know And when the time comes, he will manifest it"

"And when will that be?" Madame Vincent demanded

But Madame Hazard had grown cautious and would not say what was in her mind—that when she died Barbet would raise her from the dead Her eyes glittered, she saw herself sitting up among the candles, and a picture of the scene in the following number of *L'Illustration* She would be the heroine of France, and, imagining herself so, she looked pityingly at Madame Vincent, who, for pride's sake, would toss up her great nose as if she were a horse with an emptying food bag, and say that her dear friend Chouquette hadn't been dead at all

"That is what is infuriating about you, Emilie," said Madame Hazard aloud

"And what may that be?" asked Madame Vincent, innocent of offence

"That you never will admit anything!" cried Madame Hazard "If Voltaire rose from the dead before your eyes, you would only quote Voltaire to prove that it was impossible"

"That is unfair, Chouquette!" Madame Vincent exclaimed, aware that she had done nothing to provoke this attack "You know quite well that I do not quote to prove things I am not so stupid Nothing worth proving can be proved God, for example I quote because the lines run in my head"

between us. About some things—even strictly professional things—she could be stubborn. There was no reason in it"

"In what?"

"Well," said Hurtaux, "some of her songs she sang in costume, some in her own dress, and some she stripped for"

"Stripped?" said Barbet.

"More or less—on special evenings. For one song she wouldn't If she'd said, 'No, I won't do that at all,' I would have understood it. There are women like that Usually they have flat chests but sometimes they are religious One recognizes that, one allows for it in their salary But why—I ask you—why for one song and not for another?"

"It may have been inappropriate to the song in question," Barbet suggested

"Isn't that for me to judge?"

"No," said Barbet, "it is for her to judge."

"Then you shall judge," said Hurtaux, spreading out magnanimous hands "It was a song about a tart from the country walking through the streets of Paris In the end she goes to her room with a man and there—"

"Looks out of her window on to the roofs That's where it ends," and Barbet began to murmur it

"As I was walking up the street,
Under the lamps, under the sky—

Is that the song you mean?"

"And wasn't I right?" Hurtaux exclaimed "Wouldn't it give point to the end if the girl, when she reached her room, began—"

"Well," said Barbet, "we won't dispute about it But I thought it was a hymn

His companion regarded such ignorance with tolerant pity Then a light of suspicion dawned in his eye

"Didn't you write some of her songs? I seem to remember her telling me—"

Barbet admitted that he had given her an idea for one or two He ceased his inquiries, for he had no wish to interfere in her life

tioner's shop to buy that singly—to show me how prosperous she was"

On the paper was written

Not for money Not for a contract Penalty enclosed

THÉRÈSE DESPREUX

Keep this paper You will be able to sell it some day for more than the notes

THÉRÈSE DESPREUX

"No address," said Barbet

"The post mark was Paris She likes signing her name, that young woman"

"And you did keep the paper?"

"A memento," said Hurtaux with a flourish "Besides, she may be right I may be able to sell it some day for more than the notes"

"What were the notes?"

"A hundred and twenty"

"I will give you a hundred and fifty" Barbet put down the notes on the table between them

"It is yours, Monsieur Hazard But why?"

"It pleases me," said Barbet "But I am surprised," he added, folding Therese's letter and tucking it into his pocket, "that, if you believe in Thérèse Despreux, you should have let her go"

Recollection of the scene made Hurtaux's eyes dance and the creases about his nostrils twitch "I didn't let her go She went Bless my soul, I ran after her to the station and caught at her petticoat as she was climbing into the train"

"That was a stupid thing to do, if the train was moving," Barbet interposed "You might have pulled her back on the platform and killed her"

"Yes," said Hurtaux who was too interested in his memories to hear what Barbet was saying, "the train was moving all right Off she went—and she waved to me, too I don't think she bore me any ill will She's a professional, and what legs she has! She'd have been insulted if I hadn't admired them We may have disagreed, but we understood each other And that wasn't the only difference

BOOK TWO

The River Below Paris

Bon, bon,
Napoléon
Va rentrer dans sa maison.

OLD SONG

He was neither tolerant nor intolerant of the flesh. He happened to have won mastery over it; Thérése evidently had not. This was not a reason to condemn or to forgive her. A special link existed between them, and for him it was enough.

There was a time, soon after her going, when he felt the physical grief of loneliness The sentiment of place did not at once leave him He shunned the river because of her and chose a new mooring for his boat; but the mood passed; he grew to accept her absence without personal rebellion against it.

Chapter 1

IN THE SPRING OF '84, BARBET WENT TO LYONS TO visit merchants and afterwards to Paris From the station, where he arrived at eight in the morning, he walked across the Pont d'Austerlitz, carrying his bag He had intended to go at once to the Hôtel Bagnolet, where Madame Bagnolet would be expecting him, but by the time he reached the quays the handle of his bag was cutting his fingers and at a cafe in the Rue de l Hôpital he seated himself at a table and ordered coffee and bread

It is at such a moment as this that she might pass by, he thought, though he had supposed his mind to be occupied by the appointments he must keep in Paris, that, precisely, is how things happen in this world! But as he looked into the faces of the girls who were hurrying to their work, and the noise of shunting and the shriek of an engine s whistle came to him from the Gare d Orleans behind his back, the notion that Therese might appear at that hour in the Rue de l'Hôpital presented itself as a silly fancy, not as an imagining of the kind that falls like the touch of a hand on one's shoulder and is certainly fulfilled A set of newspapers in wooden clips was hanging within his reach He took one down and searched for the list of theatres and music halls. What a fool! She wasn't a star Her name wouldn t be there. His coffee was cold He paid and left it

A turning out of the Rue Poliveau brought him into the Impasse Marcel, which had the form of a knobbed cane, narrow at the entrance but broadening at its inner end into a circular courtyard, where stood the Hôtel Bagnolet Madame Bagnolet appeared in a black stuff gown, which smelt of peppermint, and a pair of black slippers with felt soles. She took Barbet's hand between her own, and assured him, as she did always, that nothing was changed. What

Hazard family when they came to Paris Barbet had shared them with his father and had been to them ever since, firmly resisting his mother's suggestion that he should keep his money in the family by staying with relations of hers at Vanves "People know where to find me at the Hôtel Bagnolet. Besides, it is convenient for the Jardin des Plantes"—reasons that were indeed good reasons but not the reason that weighed chiefly with him. He stayed with Madame Bagnolet because to have gone elsewhere would have required of him questions and explanations and decisions that were a waste of thought In the Impasse Marcel, the merchants whom he visited and who sometimes visited him were well known to Mademoiselle. She welcomed each by name, knew what refreshment he would take and what aspect of politics or finance or horse-racing would interest him as he followed her upstairs She knew at what hour to call Barbet in the morning and she knew that at all other times it was her duty to leave him alone and not to feel slighted if he passed her desk without speaking to her In his eyes, the virtue of the Hôtel Bagnolet was that they had learned how little he wanted and *took* him as a matter of course.

But even Mademoiselle had her ritual She showed him the rooms as if he were a newcomer, patting the bed, shaking the curtains, making sure that the windows would open and shut, even inviting him to share with her the view of the tree tops of the Jardin des Plantes which appeared as a thin panel of sky and foliage between the walls of the Impasse Meanwhile he had opened his bag and begun to take from it the smaller samples of brandy that he carried in it.

"The rest," he said, "will come from the station"

"To be sure I shall be expecting it The testing glasses are on the top shelf, as usual"

"Thank you, mademoiselle."

"And on the bottom shelf there is your cheese, and bread, and your bordeaux in half bottles."

"Thank you, mademoiselle."

"Then have you everything, Monsieur Hazard?"

would happen when she was dead, who could say? Certainly while she lived he would always find, when he came to Paris, that every thing was as it had been in his father's day Then, leading him up the passage, she made her established joke—even Mademoiselle was not changed—and this immortal and nameless creature, whom Julien Hazard had christened Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz, emerged from her shadowy desk at the foot of the stairs She was, and had always been, forty three years of age—forty three because, as Julien had said, one must fix the age of a woman somewhere, and, in the case of Mademoiselle d Austerlitz, the age of forty three would do as well as another Her hair, a natural yellow, was piled high on her head, and if ever the colour of it paled one would not notice it in the coloured beams that fell through the stained glass of the fanlight To any greeting she responded with agitated joy, like a canary when you whistle When one of Madame Bagnolet's guests said good morning to her or asked as he retired for the night, that a hot brick might be put in his bed, she answered as though his voice were the fulfilment of some girlish dream, and when Barbet said how d you do and offered her his hand, she came to him with little steps that hissed on the tiled floor and opened her eyes very wide and exclaimed, as though he had inquired into the state of her soul "Mais, ça va bien comme toujours! Suis toujours contente de la vie" All the silver bangles she was wearing shot down her wrists, to slide up her arms again as she clasped her hands at her breast and said that the train from Lyons must have been very late Her preserved enthusiasms, which she called son cœur de jeune fille did not impair her efficiency She forgot nothing No bill scratched in her angular writing had ever been inaccurate No guest who had once asked for an extra pillow was ever allowed to find his head too low again, though a year or more should separate his visits When she was at her desk, none had need of a time table Sometimes the bangles danced and the pages flickered, but one had always the impression that she was answering out of her head

It was she who led Barbet upstairs to the rooms—a communicating bedroom and sitting room—that were the perquisite of the

"Monsieur Mouche will be able to help me no doubt I expect him in at noon His brother keeps a shop in Montmartre I will inquire from him"

"That is very kind of you One does not like to lose touch with old friends."

'No," said Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz, opening her eyes to the full extent of their romance "It is sometimes as if the earth had swallowed them up," and she looked not at Barbet but through the space he occupied, as though she were alone in the room and expected to see rise up from the carpet those young men of the 'sixties who, if they had not been swallowed up, might have allowed her to dedicate herself to them.

"Everything, mademoiselle"

"And in case, as you did last year, you should lose your pencil there are three, ready sharpened, in the vase on the mantelpiece

"Thank you, mademoiselle And you yourself? You are looking very well"

"Ah, monsieur, you understand me None better You know how it is possible, in the midst of a life that few would envy, to be always happy"

She had said this on a dozen like occasions, standing in the doorway, her hand on the knob, her silver bangles fallen to her knuckles in a cascade Two phrases of their ritual remained to be spoken "Then there is nothing more I can do for you?' she would ask, turning the knob 'Nothing, mademoiselle," he would answer "You have already done everything to make me at home"

She said her part

'Then there is nothing more I can do to make you comfortable, Monsieur Hazard?'

To her astonishment he looked round from the mantelpiece, where he had been arranging his brandy flasks like a file of soldiers, and said

"There *is something*, mademoiselle You know Paris well You have many acquaintances I am looking for a young girl"

An exclamation of surprise moved her lips but she did not utter it *Her hand went to her brooch*, her finger nail scraping the cameo at her breast, her bangles clicked to her elbow in a sheath of silver, but she said only In the hotel?'

"*I am looking*,' Barbet continued, 'for a girl called Thérèse Despreux The name doesn't happen to be familiar to you? Probably she is working in a music hall or a café concert She comes from our part of the world but we have lost track of her"

Mademoiselle breathed steadily again She was anxious now only that Monsieur Hazard should not perceive in what way she had misunderstood him To her the finding of Thérèse had become a professional duty like the working out of a journey in her time table There were, she said, ways of finding anyone in Paris She would employ them

and by old stable fittings ingeniously converted All the tables were tilted a little inwards by the slope of the floor, their white discs lay up in what appeared to be a distorted perspective, the customers held their bodies against the slope of their chairs as though they were inclined against a wind, and wine slanted in the glass The horses' stalls had been reduced in height, they served now as the backs of benches, heads and shoulders appeared over them, and on the mangers, covered in, were perched, against either wall, a row of young men and women who preferred to dangle their legs or could find no place elsewhere At their backs were long gilded mirrors which, facing each other across the room, held, in unending repetition, the white discs, the inclined heads, the flickering hands and faces, the hot blaze of unshaded gas. As Barbet entered, eyes were turned to recognize the newcomer and, discovering a stranger, remained to stare.

The idea that he had entered what was, in effect, a club did not arise in his mind There was no reason that these, or any human beings, should be hostile to him and he did not suppose that they were. On his way up the room, he encountered a boy wearing an apron and carrying a tray He asked for a glass of brandy, then looked calmly about him to decide where he should sit

Every chair was full, but on one of the mangers, between two girls, a place was vacant. Putting his hands behind him on to the ledge, he hoisted himself on to it, then looked out. The room broke into a shout of laughter, for now, standing before Barbet, was the man whose place and whose two women he had unwittingly usurped, a young man, tall and thin and shaggy, Quixote and a wolf [illegible]

[illegible] apologized for having taken his seat, had evidently no thought that his seat had been [illegible] sense of [illegible] as if b[illegible] tion of [illegible] into the air and cried out

'No No No Do not laugh, my friends This man has come out of the mirror He is making a journey He is more realist than

Chapter 2

ON HIS SECOND NIGHT IN PARIS, BARBET WENT alone to Montmartre by omnibus Monsieur Mouche had been unproductive, neither he nor his brother, Aristide, had heard of the young woman in question, but Aristide, who sold their material to painters and had, by his brother's report, an acquaintance with artists and poets that was "tout ce qu'il y a d'intime," suggested that Monsieur Hazard would at any rate not waste his time if he visited the Écurie Plence which, in the past year, had become famous, and was, in Aristide's opinion, a centre of life

Barbet had had a strenuous and successful day The merchants he visited at Bercy had treated him with friendly hospitality, and his notebook, which he studied over a solitary meal in the square of St Germain des Prés, contained entries of which his father would have been proud He would have liked to wander up the Rue Bonaparte when his coffee was done and perhaps look into St Sulpice on his way home Once in the Hôtel Bagnolet, he would have sat in his chair, preferring the adventure of thought to the book on his knee, then have slept, glad that the contacts of the day, friendly though they had been, were over Instead, he took the omnibus to Montmartre The Écurie Plence was found sooner than he wished, he turned a corner and it was staring at him

In spite of the place's name, it had not occurred to him that he would find himself in a stable A floor of paving-stones sloped towards what had once been a central drain, now boarded over At the end of the room was a stage enclosed within a proscenium arch painted crimson and decorated with horses' heads in gilt The curtains were apart and the scene lighted The middle of the room, empty as a ballroom between dances, was flanked by crowded tables

and by old stable fittings ingeniously converted All the tables were tilted a little inwards by the slope of the floor, their white discs lay up in what appeared to be a distorted perspective, the customers held their bodies against the slope of their chairs as though they were inclined against a wind, and wine slanted in the glass The horses' stalls had been reduced in height, they served now as the backs of benches, heads and shoulders appeared over them, and on the mangers, covered in, were perched, against either wall, a row of young men and women who preferred to dangle their legs or could find no place elsewhere At their backs were long gilded mirrors which, facing each other across the room, held, in unending repetition, the white discs, the inclined heads, the flickering hands and faces, the hot blaze of unshaded gas As Barbet entered, eyes were turned to recognize the newcomer and, discovering a stranger, remained to stare.

The idea that he had entered what was, in effect, a club did not arise in his mind There was no reason that these, or any human beings, should be hostile to him and he did not suppose that they were. On his way up the room, he encountered a boy wearing an apron and carrying a tray He asked for a glass of brandy, then looked calmly about him to decide where he should sit

Every chair was full, but on one of the mangers, between two girls, a place was vacant. Putting his hands behind him on to the ledge, he hoisted himself on to it, then looked out The room broke into a shout of laughter, for now, standing before Barbet, was the man whose place and whose two women he had unwittingly usurped, a young man, tall and thin and shaggy, Quixote and a wolf ho[illegible]

[illegible] instantly apologized for having taken his seat, had evidently no thought that his seat had been taken no sense of claim on it or on [illegible]

as if by an expl[illegible]

tion of Barbet [illegible] into the air and cried out

"No No No Do not laugh, my friends. This man has come out of the mirror He is making a journey He is more realist than

us all He is happy He has such eyes in his head that he has no need to pretend that the world is vile He perceives that you Madeleine, are an angel, and that I, Sebastien Cugnot, am not, when drunk, a fool Look at the eyes in his head!"

To this oration, so passionately begun and ended in a voice strangled by its own irony, the audience responded at first by rapt attention, then by mocking applause Cugnot took the glass that the girl on Barbet's right had been holding for him, emptied it, and turning again to face the room, leaned back between her knees

"And after all, who are you?"

"My name is Hazard I am called Barbet Hazard I come from Roussignac I am selling my brandy in Paris"

"I am Sebastien—Sébastien Cugnot I paint and I make marionettes I am a greater painter than the world will ever know Unfortunately I am also a greater painter than I myself shall ever believe That is why everything I do ends badly I am a tight rope walker who loses his nerve half-way across My vice is—what is my vice, Madeleine?'

"Ah," said the girl who had held his glass—a girl with deep violet eyes, a full mouth and the high, rounded cheeks of a child, "your vice, Cugnot, is that you make speeches You make a speech when I am taking off your shoes My vice is that I take them off'

"Why do you? said Barbet

"And why shouldn't I?'

'There is no reason that you shouldn't, mademoiselle There are a dozen that you should I was asking which of them—"

"It's simple enough, Madeleine said She ran her fingers over Cugnot's head, thrusting his hair forward over his eyes, and would say no more of the subject And now, she continued at last, 'what do you say now, Monsieur du Miroir?

"*I am very grateful to you mademoiselle, for his sake* But it has always seemed strange to me—in women, I mean in women more often than in men—that they will not admit their virtues to themselves, but call them vices and think of them in that way"

The girl on his left, who had remained hitherto averted and sullen

while she twisted and twisted a great carbuncle ring that she wore on her left thumb, now turned her eyes on Barbet, and Cugnot's face came up and the group at the nearest table set down their glasses

'For example?" said Madeleine.

'But this will never do," exclaimed a middle aged Jew, rising from the table with an air of authority Before continuing to speak, he ran his fingers outward across his eyes and down his cheeks as though he were drawing pain out of his head "I must interrupt you, Madeleine Cugnot, you have not introduced your friend"

'He introduces himself He is the fool But this, my dear Barbet," Cugnot continued, bowing at the Jew, 'is a Great Man in whose court we must all sing for our supper He is Plence. He has genius —the genius, peculiar to his race, of a connoisseur He owns this stable We are his horses, we are his mares. He chooses us, he rides us, he enters us for races, he pats us and feeds us and buries us Is there one in this room—perhaps not one—who will survive him and of whom posterity will say 'Plence was his groom'? The rest of us, certainly, will wear his racing colours in the grave. 'Sébastien Cugnot? Sébastien Cugnot? Ah yes, he was John the Baptist in the Écurie Plence He stood up and prophesied Sometimes he brought two women with him like dogs on a string it was his way of advertising himself' That is what they will say, fifty years hence. 'In Paris of the 'eighties, L'Écurie Plence—L'Écurie Plence—L'Écurie *Plence*' You see he is smiling It charms him It is true He will bury us all You understand, of course, that I am paid to insult him To-night I have made my speech I shall pay nothing" [illegible]

1

When there was room at Plence's table, Barbet and Cugnot, with the girl called Madeleine, were brought to it The girl with the ring remained on the ledge, Cugnot having forgotten her From time to time a man stood up *on the stage*, demanded audience, *and* recited his own poems, or a girl sang fierce verses with rhymes like the clash of knives thrown on an *iron* table, or a group of students, setting up

an apparatus like the box of Punch and Judy, crouched behind it to give voices to a piece they had written for marionettes

"They told me," said Barbet to Cugnot, "that from here singers and dancers are sometimes recruited for the music halls?"

"They told you that! Did you hear, Plence? They told him that"

"They told him the truth," Plence answered

Cugnot tipped back his chair "Once this was a charming place We talked, we sang, we amused ourselves, we heard verses Do we now exist to recruit the music-halls and to entertain le déluge?"

"Le deluge?" said Barbet

'It is Cugnot's word for the aristocracy of the Third Republic. At any rate our ark is beginning to float on it As you see"—and Plence pointed to the stage—"I have founded a theatre—"

"Le Theâtre Plence!" Cugnot exclaimed "Is it possible that you have not heard of it?"

"I am from the provinces," Barbet answered in order that Monsieur Plence should not feel hurt, but Plence seemed not to care

"It is a theatre," he explained, "chiefly for silhouettes or marionettes But there are variety turns as well Le déluge has heard of it On Saturday and Sunday nights they come here You shall come as my guest"

"Soon," said Cugnot, "it will be Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday—and Thursday and Friday as well L'Ecurie is finished It will appear in the guide books Americans will describe it in their diaries of travel The English will sit at this table and expect us to throw knives for them"

"Then," said Plence, "we will throw knives for them It is a livelihood like another We can continue our civilization elsewhere—"

He stopped abruptly A grave young man had mounted the platform and come forward to recite his verses The room was at once silent, and, when the verses were spoken, they were eagerly applauded and discussed The poet came to Plence's table and smouldered there, forgetting the drink given him, his hands clasped together and clipped between his knees "He has never dared to re

cite before," Madeleine whispered "This, for him, is success He hasn't said twenty words What do you suppose he's thinking about? The Academy?"

"That he has no one to share it with," Barbet answered at once.

"Ah!" the girl exclaimed "It is true, of course He lives alone None of us knows him He belongs to no one," but she forgot the young poet, Cugnot had begun to speak, her eyes returned to him Whoever was singing or reciting, whatever the conversation at the table, even when she was looking elsewhere or speaking to others, she seemed to have Cugnot in her charge, as though he were a blind man whom she was leading

Barbet watched the scene and heard the conversation around him with lively interest He was particularly interested when Plence, after listening to a girl who had sung and recited at the piano, began to criticize the art of a diseuse, saying that no art was less considered as an art, that the women chose their songs from the music shops with the idea always of placating their audience—never of challenging them to the appreciation of a new style "The music halls bully the girls into behaving as if they were clowns," he said "Now clowning is traditional and even a clown of genius must work within the tradition So must an actor to a great extent Even if he's not using classical material, even if the play's modern, he must always use a convention He has a choice of conventions, certainly, but he must use one of the conventions that his audience recognizes For him it is a necessary code between stage and audience It carries its meaning *because its* origins are in the past and because every playgoer, as he enters a theatre, adjusts his mind to it. A painter, if he's a revolutionary, can create a new convention of his own and hope that people will become accustomed to it some day He can wait—though he may have to wait until he's dead and rotten. But an actor can't wait *There's* no posterity for him He must use a convention his audience accepts to-night or can be persuaded to accept pretty soon And even a writer," Plence continued, wishing to draw the young poet into his argument, "even a writer is to some

extent bound by the past Isn't that true, Casimir? Like a painter, he can afford to wait, he can rebel and wait, but literature has an inescapable past, he is held by it as he is by heredity There are, for example, a hundred forms of verse but there is a perceptible general convention governing them all—how shall I put it?—a convention which—"

"Which tells the listener that what he's listening to isn't prose," Cugnot put in, ' which enables him to make an adjustment to the intensity of poetry A modern poet, until he learns better, speaks of defying the past or of breaking away from it He wants to march into exile with all the brass bands playing In fact, he can't The most he can do is to move house into a different part of the country from that in which Corneille lived, still he remains in the same kingdom with him There is a rule of poetry wider than Corneille's rule or any particular rule of verse—a wider rule or, as you say, convention that includes him and all French poets The man who thinks that, when he has mocked at Lamartine and called himself a realist, he has created a new world is like a man who moves from Paris to Senlis and says that he has discovered a continent"

"And yet," said Casimir, wrenching up his head, 'it is necessary to rebel"

"It is sometimes necessary to move from Paris to Senlis"

"It is sometimes necessary to believe that Senlis is a new continent," Casimir replied "If not, no one would move"

"Certainly," said Cugnot, ' it is necessary to move, but to understand also that, having moved, one is still in France"

Plence had listened to this dialogue with darting satisfaction, his lips parted, his eyes moving from face to face Now he began to pat the table with a soft, emphatic hand

"And the art of the diseuse,' he said, ' lies outside all that That is my point The great art of poetry, the secondary art of acting, the strange, specialized art of clowning, each is held—or, more accurately, each moves and changes and grows—within a great convention that is—if one may put it so—the language of the art—a language which, in each instance, the world has learned to understand But the art of the diseuse has no Corneille, no Mozart, no Michael

Angelo—even no Ingres It has no Paris from which to move to Senlis It has no including France And yet the diseuses we have work always as if they were bound by a tradition that does not, in their case, exist."

'I know one who doesn't," said Barbet

They had altogether forgotten him, and came up, visibly surprised, out of the waters of their own controversy to find him quietly regarding them from the bank

"But that can be of no interest to you," he added hastily "I'm sorry After all, you do not teach me how to make cognac," and he folded his hands, prepared to listen again

For a moment, Plence seemed willing to accept this, to allow Barbet to retire into silence, and to plunge again into the pleasures of his own discourse

'A diseuse—" he began

'Plence," cried Cugnot "Look at our friend Look at his eyes In this instant, while you tip the wine in your glass, you are throwing a fortune away"

Plence blinked at him "Why?"

"Why do you think our friend came out of the mirror? Why did he hoist himself into *my* place? How does it happen that he, who has never been *to the Écurie before*, is sitting at your table? These things do not happen without a reason I was listening while you said that our *diseuses* work always as if they were bound by a false tradition, and suddenly, at my elbow, I heard him say 'I know one who doesn't' It is quite simple What he says is true He knows one who doesn t Who is she?'

"Her name is Thérese Despreux"

Plence once more ran his hands outward over his eyes and down his cheeks. "I never heard of her," he answered in a tone of irritation and finality

Cugnot *imitated* his gesture "Plence! Plence! You who know so much! You who are so astute! You who have a nose for the truffles! You keep a stable You are offered the winner of the Grand Prix You wipe your brilliant eyes and you say 'I never heard of her!'"

"Well," Plence cried, "have you?"

"Certainly"

"That is a lie When?"

"To-night Didn't you hear him say the name? Thérèse Despreux Thérèse Despreux Thérèse Despreux At ten o'clock in any music-hall in the world"

Barbet was at a loss He did not understand why, or in what way, these two men were quarrelling, nor did he understand with how great an effort of self-control Plence compelled himself to reach out for the declamatory hand that Cugnot had raised in the air, and draw it to the table, and say·

"When you speak like this, Cugnot, you drive me mad, but, when you speak like this, I listen to you I am Plence I keep the stable I have judgment but I do not see visions You are without judgment when you are sane, but when you are mad—"

"Visions?" said Cugnot, suddenly docile "Have you never known, quite certainly, where you must put your money en plein?"

After a moment's consideration, Plence interlaced his fingers and leaned across the table towards Barbet

"Tell me, my friend, who is this girl?"

"She is a local girl She sang and danced in the Cheval Pie at Roussignac"

"And afterwards?"

"At Bordeaux A man named Hurtaux—"

"Hurtaux? He has her? Under contract?"

"She ran away from Bordeaux He caught at her skirt while the train was moving But she paid the penalty on her contract," Barbet explained anxiously "She sent him this," and he produced from his pocketbook the sheet of hand-made paper he had bought from Hurtaux He cleared a space among the saucers and laid it on the table before Plence

"Why do you show me this?"

"I thought," said Barbet, "that you seemed to doubt her existence"

"And where is she now?"

"Where? That is what I am trying to find out"

"But have you news of her?"

"Unfortunately none"

"Good God," Plence exclaimed, "she may be in Marseilles by now"

"No," Barbet answered "She is in Paris"

Madeleine's fingers closed on Cugnot's wrist She threw back her head and laughed and sighed and said to Barbet, secretly under her breath, so that none but Cugnot heard her "Que Dieu te garde. Que Dieu te benisse. Tu la verras demain," and Cugnot, leaning forward, intervened suddenly

"You have asked every question, Plence, except the one that matters I will ask it Tell me," he continued, returning to Barbet the paper Thérese had written, "in what way is she different *from* other diseuses?"

Barbet did not answer

"Has she a better voice?"

"She has a good voice."

"Is she more beautiful?"

Barbet shook his head

"You said she was independent of the false tradition *which*—"

"*Did I* say that?" said Barbet *with a smile* "*It* doesn't sound like *me.*" *He looked* round the room over the heads of those who, at *the table*, were gazing at him, and he said "It's very hot *in here* I have had a long day I think I will go *home.*" *But* he did not rise Instead, taking *the stem* of a glass between his finger and thumb, he twisted *it to and fro*, edging its base further and further up the table along *a rivulet* of *spilled wine, and Cugnot, to* recall him, laid his palm upon the glass *Barbet*, surprised, looked straight into his face and said

"You see, while she tells a story *it is true*"

It was evident that *he had* more *to* say, and they waited

"That's what's so *odd. You'd think* that there'd be nothing to stop her But there is *Monsieur Plence* will understand She's like a race horse which—"

"You leave her to *me,*" said Plence "I'll train her, if that's the trouble. What *does she do*—bite or swerve?"

"Well, you see," Barbet continued, "it isn't so simple as that. At first, she always thinks that she is right and that whoever criticizes her is a blind fool. Not that she can't criticize herself, she can—she can be fierce against her own mistakes, but only after a long bitter struggle. But no one can help her. She won't let them. If anyone offers her an idea—I mean, an idea about her own performance—she becomes angry, as though she were being invaded and until she has got over it and stopped being suspicious, really there's nothing that even Monsieur Plence could do."

Plence smiled. "There are ways, I assure you, of dealing with any actress. You bully one, you flatter another, you make love to a third. Or, if she's genuinely intelligent, you give her your reasons—one, two, three—and then—"

"Yes, that is all very well," Barbet interrupted, "but in any discussion with her the important sentences have to be spoken at intervals of at least a week. It isn't a question of persuading her that an idea is valuable but of giving her time to forget that it was not originally her own. She isn't slow, she's extremely quick, she knows in a flash the value of an idea, but, if it was not she who thought of it, she resists and resists it, until at last her resistance snaps, and to save her egotism she gives the idea a new dress and wakes up one morning to find that it is her own."

Barbet paused, smiling, then continued to himself. "The time has then come to speak the second sentence of the argument and to watch the process repeat itself. And now," he went on, "you will think she is a very stubborn and foolish girl, but it is not so, she is a brilliant one, and this everlasting resistance to other people's ideas isn't stupid rebellion. It isn't rebellion at all. It's self discipline. *Self* discipline," he repeated. "You see this match box? This resistance is the box on which to strike her own match. She has arrogance but never, never complacency. She is always fighting a battle and never winning it. But she must fight by herself. And that means—"

Barbet stopped and began once more to push his glass up the rivulet of wine. Cugnot again put his hand upon it.

"It means," Barbet exclaimed with energy, dragging back the

glass and gripping it to him, "that the work she does is done with blood That is all That is all Take it or leave it"

No one had expected him to speak so freely or with so much precision, and he, awaking from his own eloquence and seeing the close regarding astonishment of the faces surrounding him, said to himself I must have talked a lot What made me let myself go like that? But to them he said nothing

Plence declared that he was extremely interested by Barbet's account of Therèse and added, in a lordly way, that the finding of her might be left to him. He would send out his scouts, if she was in Montmartre, if she was in Paris, he would find her—and Plence dropped the subject, summoned to his table the students who had experimented with marionettes and pointed out their errors to them

'You are wasting your time," said Cugnot, putting his hand under Barbet's arm and lifting him from his chair "Plence is a man who believes nothing until he has seen it That is why he makes money—and makes nothing else If you think he will stir a finger to find your Therese Despreux, you are mistaken, though, if she is found, he will know how to bring her to market. Come, we will find her ourselves'

But they did not find her They went from place to place. Each to Barbet was like the last—a clash of voices and glass and crockery, a desert of tables, rubbed plush and squeaking chairs, but he was happy in their intervening walks on narrow pavements where Cugnot and Madeleine and he had often to go in single file, among lean cats that came up from the gutters Looking at Madeleine's back, he became aware of the extraordinary patience of this girl who could have no interest in the search and might well have said that they were looking for a needle in a haystack Instead she took it for granted that, if Cugnot had set out to find Thérese Despreux, it was necessary to find her, and when Barbet said "You must be tired mademoiselle why should you be dragged farther?' she smiled over her shoulder and answered "You are good for Cugnot. He will be able to paint to-morrow"

"Well, you see," Barbet continued, "it isn't so simple as that At first, she always thinks that she is right and that whoever criticizes her is a blind fool Not that she can't criticize herself, she can—she can be fierce against her own mistakes, but only after a long bitter struggle But no one can help her She won't let them If anyone offers her an idea—I mean, an idea about her own performance—she becomes angry, as though she were being invaded, and until she has got over it and stopped being suspicious, really there's nothing that even Monsieur Plence could do"

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"Why not?" said Barbet, "if you can make her keep still"

They walked together until Cugnot halted "This is my door Come in You go first, Madeleine Here are the matches."

But Barbet said he must return to the Hôtel Bagnolet, he had business to do there at ten in the morning

'How shall you go?' Madeleine asked

'Walk," said Barbet, "unless someone drives me"

He had not left them five minutes when a cart of vegetables passed him. A basket fell into the street

"He, he," he cried, "here's a basket of yours."

He lifted it on to the tail of the cart and made fast the cord The boy who had been driving leaned against the wheel

"That was lucky," he said "I should have been beaten for that," and he was glad of Barbet's company on his journey The horse knew his own way, and turned from the Rue La Bruyère into the *Place St Georges* with no more guidance than a shake of the reins The boy was ill and tired, and Barbet, at the sight of the *Hôtel Thiers*, which had been burned in '71, bestirred himself to tell stories of those days, to which the boy responded at first with sullen grunts, then with eyes turning and watchful, then with laughter All the way down the Rue Montmartre the stories continued until, as they approached the vegetable market, the boy began to tell in his turn of his daily adventures and of his hope that he might before long escape from work at the Halles and go, as his elder brother had done to a farm in *Normandy* Last year, when he had been very ill he had visited the farm on which his brother was employed, and he exchanged tales of it for Barbet's tales of Roussignac and the Charente. When the cart drew up near to the church of St Eustache, the boy's face was happy and alive, he would not willingly allow Barbet to go "I'm early this morning There's ten minutes to spare." He gave a friend charge of his cart and walked with Barbet, saying he would put him on his way, there was a short cut he knew of to the east of the Halles 'You pass the Tour St Jacques

At last, seated at a café table, Cugnot fell asleep—not with slow, drowsy nodding, but suddenly, as if, while walking at full speed along a path, he had come to a crevasse and disappeared into it. Madeleine wrote his address on an envelope that she took from his pocket and handed it to Barbet

"He will let you know at your Hôtel Bagnolet," she said "He won't forget He will find her"

"Why he should take so much trouble for me, I don't understand," Barbet answered

Madeleine made a movement of her shoulders that, in another woman, would have been a shrug, but in her was a contraction of them, a pressing of them forward—one of her many smooth and gentle movements that gave an impression of graciousness, a graciousness of the body that belongs to coloured peoples and to certain great animals "Perhaps to annoy Plence," she answered then raised her eyebrows, took breath and smiled "No He despises Plence Perhaps because he likes you" Then she looked at Cugnot, who slept without sagging, alert, like a blind man erect in his chair "I expect it's because he wants to see her face"

"Her face?"

"You made him imagine it, you know You made me imagine it—though you didn't describe a feature"

Barbet was silent, and she said after a little while "There's not another man on earth who wouldn't have asked me then what I imagined All the others would have asked that"

"Would they?" said Barbet "It's no merit in me that I didn't. I wasn't being polite, you know I supposed that you had imagined her as she is"

She smiled "It's simple, isn't it?" and she inclined her head towards Cugnot "He's like that But in other ways he's complicated When he's painting, when I'm sitting for him—" She broke off "I'm his model, you know, as well as his mistress"

"But you have not always been a model?" Barbet said

"Certainly I wasn't born one," she replied "Now, shall I wake him?"

Cugnot believed that he had not been asleep

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He lifted it on to the tail of the cart and made fast the cord The boy who had been driving leaned against the wheel

"That was lucky," he said "I should have been beaten for that," and he was glad of Barbet's company on his journey The horse knew his own way, and turned from the Rue La Bruyère into the Place St Georges with no more guidance than a shake of the reins The boy was ill and tired, and Barbet, at the sight of the Hôtel Thiers, which had been burned in '71, bestirred himself to tell stories of those days, to which the boy responded at first with sullen grunts, then with eyes turning and watchful, then with laughter All the way down the Rue Montmartre the stories continued until, as they approached the vegetable market, the boy began to tell in his turn of his daily adventures and of his hope that he might before long escape from work in the Halles and go, as his elder brother had done to a farm in Normandy Last year, when he had been very ill he had visited the farm on which his brother was employed, and he exchanged tales of it for Barbet's tales of Roussignac and the Charente When the cart drew up near to the church of St. Eustache, the boy's face was happy and alive, he would not willingly allow Barbet to go "I'm early this morning There's ten minutes to spare." He gave a friend charge of his cart and walked with Barbet, saying he would put him on his way, there was a short cut he knew of to the east of the Halles "You pass the Tour St Jacques

and keep on until you come to the Hôtel de Ville; then you can cross the river at Notre-Dame." They went together no further than the square of the Innocents. There Barbet found in his pocket three francs and some smaller money and said good-bye. The boy returned to his work, and Barbet, looking up beyond the bas-reliefs of the fountain to the white morning sky, thought that he had been foolish to wander about all night in quest of Thérèse. By now, she had another life and would have forgotten him. He had assumed that she needed him, but now, as he came to the river, the simplicity of his mind was crossed, his confidence failed him, and he paused to watch a string of barges go down stream. I've lost sight of her, that's all, he said to himself. If ever she knew how I have spent to-night, she'd think I was a pretty fool. His eye followed the barges and the slow, bulging swirl of their wake. For a moment his mind was emptied of her. And yet, he thought, she isn't vanished She isn't in Marseilles. She's in Paris. To-night I have been close to her While we were wandering from café to café, if I had turned in suddenly at—but he could not see the turning; only the staircase, the first landing and the second and the third, and the room with three beds on one of which she was sitting, a coat wrapped round her and a bare foot thrust out with a mule dangling from the toe. The barges had turned out of sight and Barbet walked on across the river. Madame Bagnolet had given him a key and he let himself in. While he was winding his watch, he looked at his list of engagements for the day, then said his prayers I shall be saying them again in three hours, he thought. That's what comes of staying out all night, and he tucked his head into his pillow, curled himself into a ball, and went to sleep.

Chapter 3

NEXT DAY, WHEN AT NOON HE CAME IN FROM HIS work, Mademoiselle d Austerlitz rose from her desk to say that a lady had called upon him and left a note

Will you come to Cugnot's studio any time before six? I think we have news of her

MADELEINE VAUTHIER

He had a second appointment in the afternoon and came to Montmartre soon after five. Madeleine was alone

' Cugnot is at the Gare du Nord "

"The Gare du Nord? '

' He is painting it " She looked at a clock that had pheasants engraved on its face ' He ought to have been back by now "

You have news of Therese?"

Sit down " she said, and I will tell you about it. Do you mind if I try to draw you while we talk?

'Not at all' he answered ' I ought to be a good model Therese used to laugh at me because I have a habit of sitting still "

Madeleine was sharpening pencils She's very slow, Barbet thought to give me her news whatever it is Is she frightened of it? Has she heard that Therese is dead?"

If you have heard that she is dead, that will be wrong," he said

The pencil clicked into the ledge of the easel. "You are so sure?"

Oh yes, quite sure She is alive and in Paris "

Yes" Madeleine answered "she is alive and in Paris At least she was until very lately This morning, early, a girl came to the

door and insisted on seeing Cugnot An odd girl If she had been prosperous, she might have had a swagger of her own Not by nature a cringer or a tart, but now both, very poor and with a way of looking at you as if she expected you to hit her I thought she'd come for money So she had—but I thought she meant to blackmail Cugnot about something, and it wasn't that Do you remember, last night, we went to the Deux Lapins?'

"I'm vague about the names," said Barbet

"It was one of the first places we went to after leaving Plence. There were four girls sitting together in a corner—one with a black veil This girl came in and joined them after we had gone She heard we had been asking for Thérèse Despreux and she knew her address. She came here this morning to sell it"

"To sell it," Barbet repeated "Well, poor girl How much do I owe Monsieur Cugnot?'

"Five francs She wanted ten"

On this Barbet made no comment except "Did she give you her own address?"

"Of course she did I should leave her alone if I were you

"Oh," said Barbet with a smile, 'I don't think I have anything to fear"

"You may think not, but that kind bites"

"Not me," Barbet answered 'They laugh at me, you know So do you and Monsieur Cugnot That's why you're so kind to me But that's no matter What did she say?'

Madeleine did not answer at once her pencil moved firmly on her paper, and Barbet, without shifting his head, let his eyes travel about the room "Well," Madeleine said at last, 'it's not easy I don't know what your interest may be in Thérèse Despreux, and—"

"That is simple, mademoiselle I love her She thinks that I—if she thinks of me at all, she thinks that I m a kind comic fellow—the sort of provincial, you understand who is completely ignorant of the world I amuse her for that reason That is all"

"And are you ignorant of the world?'

'Not in the least I have been a soldier"

"That's just as well in the circumstances It makes it less hard to say what I have to say This woman told us—"

"Why do you speak of her so harshly, mademoiselle? After all—"

"After all—what?"

"Not long ago she was a very small child"

"Was she? I promise you she's forgotten it by now Don't you understand? She came here for money. She wouldn't write down the address until we gave it her"

"I expect she needed it," said Barbet. "And please," he continued, speaking with gentleness and consideration, "please believe that, whatever has happened to Thérèse, you need not hesitate to tell me. Whatever she had done, she remains the same human being"

The sheet of paper was tugged away from the drawing-pins. "I'm sorry I'm wasting your time I can't draw you now"

Last night Barbet had not been aware of the streak of hardness in Madeleine that she had exhibited in talking of the girl who had brought news of Thérèse, and he kept his eyes on her She stood at the window, looking out, her arms straight behind her, her fingers interlocked, her shoulders forced back, she spoke across her shoulder The girl, who was known as Annette, had lived with Thérèse on the third floor of a lodging house Formerly Thérèse had been employed in several café-concerts and petty music-halls, sometimes in the programme, sometimes as a dresser or odd-job woman on the side of the stage, sometimes as waitress or ouvreuse Annette, too, had done work of the same kind when she could get it, but whether her job was or was not connected with the stage made no odds to her, there had been a dressmaker who employed her and she earned, on the side, at a maison de passe. Thérèse clung to the stage at all costs Annette had told her she'd get ill and die, but she said "Leave me alone! I'll live in my own way and my way is in the theatre. The rest isn't real"

"And what did she live on meanwhile?" Barbet asked "I suppose she put by a little to tide her over between jobs?"

"Perhaps." Madeleine raised incredulous eyebrows "But it is

as well to face the probabilities. You know how Annette earned her pocket-money."

Barbet was silent. Then he asked whether Annette was still living with Thérèse.

"She was until six weeks ago. Then she was offered four weeks as a dancer in a touring chorus."

"And since she came back?"

"She hasn't seen Thérèse."

"Why *not?*"

"I asked that. She said: 'She was ill when I left.'"

"Is that a reason?"

"She said," Madeleine answered, with her eyes on Barbet's face, "that she thought Thérèse might be dead."

"Still," said Barbet, "I don't understand."

"Don't you? Annette deserted her. And that's not all"

"What more?" Barbet asked steadily.

"She had money that belonged to Thérèse."

"Did she admit that?"

"When I guessed it, she did. She howled like a coward, then admitted it. All the pleasures of confession! Forty-one francs. She said it was borrowed. . . . And now, I suppose, you will still say that it's not long since that woman was a very small child!"

"Oddly enough," said Barbet, "I don't think Thérèse would hate or despise her. Why do you smile?"

"You endow your Thérèse with your own qualities, Monsieur Hazard. Do you really imagine for example that this girl you love has been living in chastity since you last saw her?"

"Good heavens, no," said Barbet. "But that doesn't say she'd despise or hate a woman for stealing forty-one francs . . . *Or that* she sold herself."

"And if you found that she had sold herself—that she went to the same house as Annette—"

"Did Annette say that?"

"On the contrary, she said that Thérèse had a catchword—"

"'Not for money. Not for a contract,'" said Barbet. "It's an interesting rule, isn't it?"

"And suppose she broke it? What effect would it have on you?"

"On me? That isn't the question And yet," he added, "perhaps it is. Perhaps it is a question I may have to answer You see, mademoiselle, I am not at all a saint, certainly not an ascetic, though I live plainly enough as a matter of taste, but I try to take the simplest possible view of everything and not to be shocked by myself or by anyone else." He picked up from the floor the piece of paper on which the drawing of him had been begun "It is true, then—I do look like a water-spaniel Finish it some day, mademoiselle." He put the paper into her hands "You think that Monsieur Cugnot will be in before long?"

"Are you waiting for him?"

"I thought I should like to thank him"

"Is that why you have been talking to me all this time?" Madeleine smiled. "Good heavens, I shall never understand you! Look, here is your Therèse's address, Rue Lilas—somewhere between the Rue La Bruyère and the Rue Notre-Dame de Lorette. You must ask"

"Did you say the Rue La Bruyère?"

"Why does that surprise you?"

"It doesn't I must have passed very close to the Rue Lilas last night And may I have the other address?"

"Annette"

"Please, if I may Here are the five francs."

She took from his hand the piece of paper she had given him and wrote on it again

"God protect you," she said. "I expect He will."

When Annette heard that he had come from Cugnot's studio, she was frightened into a stream of words.

"She's no better than I am. It's she who says I stole the money, but it's not true. It's not true. You have no proof"

"Were you fond of Therèse?" Barbet asked

"Of *Therèse*? I wasn't speaking of her I meant Cugnot's girl"

"I know Shall we forget her? Tell me about Therèse."

"What do you want to know?"

"Was she ever hungry?"

"We both were"

"Any friends?"

"Oh, she had friends They weren't any good though She wouldn't take anything except a meal now and then And she always made herself out worse than she was Just when a fellow was beginning to feel responsible for her, she'd go off with another —and say so, too And often," Annette added, "when they wanted her to come to a meal, she'd make them ask me too That was generally the end of it What's more, she meant it to be"

"But you were fond of her?"

"Fond of her? What a queer chap you are 'Fond'—what d you think I am—her sister? I was mad about her if that's what you mean" Annette paused, picked up a stocking she had been darning and laid it down again "So you see," she went on, "after the affair with the money, I had to go I thought I could pay it back I spent part of it on things for her—I swear I did That made it worse, she thought I was giving her a present and I let her So, when I couldn't pay back, I had to go, hadn't I? I suppose she found afterwards that it was gone There was a loose tile 'That's the last to fall back on,' she'd say I suppose she went for the money after I'd gone"

"There it is," Barbet said, counting it out on to the seat of a wooden chair "Forty-one francs"

"But I can't take it to her now!" said Annette

"Yes, you can"

"I can't What should I say?"

"Talk to her about other things and leave the money"

"But she'd ask First thing she'd say—"

"No," Barbet answered, "you know that's not true You forget, I've known Therese since she was a child She has no malice It's almost a fault in her And anyhow," he added with a smile, "she'd be much too curious to see what *you* were going to say to help you by giving you a cue"

"You're very clever, no doubt," Annette replied "But I warn you—you'd better put that money back into your pocket I warn you"

"I'll take the risk," said Barbet

He said good bye to Annette, made his way down her stairs, and, once in the street, took off his hat and wiped his forehead Rue Lilas. Well, he thought, it has a pretty name anyway, and set out On the way he bought some grapes, a bottle of red wine, a corkscrew, a loaf of bread, some sausage and a basket to carry them in And now, he said to himself, something quite useless, it will please her more than food or drink, besides, she may not need food or drink Flowers? He had not hands enough to carry them, but he saw in a junk-shop a small box with lilies of the valley enamelled on its lid and this he could slip into his waistcoat pocket. The man in the shop said it was a patch box That ought to be useless enough, Barbet thought as he marched off with it, and he took it out in the street, unable to deny himself the pleasure of unwrapping it and studying the enamelled lilies, hoping they would please her

It was almost at the spot where the vegetables had fallen from the boy's cart that he turned out of the Rue La Bruyère. Rue Lilas, Number Ten, was a tall, narrow house, very dark, that smelt of onions and wet clothes. A fat child carrying a pail told him that Despreux lived on the third landing, but was out

"Out? She's not ill, then?"

'She's out," the child repeated and went off with her pail.

Barbet made the journey of the stairs, glad of his basket which would make their meeting easy There would be no need for either of them to speak while she took out the contents, her head would be bent over the basket and he would stand aside saying nothing and looking at the top of her head. On the third landing he stopped His heart was beating, there was the same tightness about his heart that there had been when his father had taken him to a bull fight at Nîmes. In a moment, he thought, her hand will take the basket, and he held it out in the air, as though he were offering it to her He remembered that the child had said that Despreux was out, but did not believe it When he knocked on the door her voice would answer

He knocked

'Who's there?"

"Barbet"

"Who? What do you want? Why in heaven's name can't I be left alone?"

He knocked again "Thérèse It's me It's Barbet—Barbet Hazard"

This time she heard He knew that she became rigid and listened Then she came across the room—but how slowly! The key turned in the lock, the door opened

"You!"

"Thérèse . May I come in?"

"I suppose so" She turned her back on him, advanced a few paces, and sat down clumsily on one of the three beds that the room contained

"Well," she said, "what have you come for?"

"To see you"

"Not much worth seeing"

Her eyes moved suddenly from Barbet's face Their gaze was directed towards the wall on his left and, having rested there a little while, moved to the tin wash stand, then to the ripped and sagging wall-paper that surrounded a pipe to which a stove had formerly been attached, then to each of the two bedsteads, naked to their rusty springs, opposite the bed on which she herself was seated There was nothing furtive or hasty in her gaze, nothing ashamed—only an intense and almost impersonal curiosity as though, in another self that Barbet's presence had evoked, she were watching herself in this scene, and she began to smile and said "Well? What do you think of her? She hasn't been a success, has she? Not that it matters. But tell me," she added, "how the devil did you run me to earth?"

"I'll tell you about that if you'll come out and eat with me Or would you rather eat here?"

"Here?"

He presented his basket and she laughed aloud "What did you think? Did you think I was starving?" But she took the basket on to her lap and began to unpack it He watched her hands moving and the top of her head As soon as she came upon grapes, she laid a bunch in her left palm and began to eat "Oh, I'm hungry!" she

exclaimed "But I'm not starving, you know. I'm sorry—but really I'm not! Just ordinary hungry I've been out looking for a job. Couldn't we eat here? That's what I should like. I don't want to go out again yet. Let's eat here and afterwards go to a café and talk I'm glad you came I didn't think I was, but I am!" At this she came upon the corkscrew "It's new Did you buy it?"

'I thought you might not have one"

Her eyebrows went up, her lips were pressed together; she made her face of a clown "When will you know me, I wonder?" And while both his hands were occupied with corkscrew and bottle, she put her arm round him and laid her face for a moment against the side of his head as though she were caressing a dog "Well," she said, taking plates out of a cupboard in the wall, "your hair still grows the same way That's something certain in a doubtful world"

They ate the food he had brought and shared the bottle of wine Meanwhile he tried to tell her of his adventures of last night, but could not hold her attention She wanted him to tell her of Roussignac. Did Anton take as much at the Cheval Pie as had been taken in her day? No? Good, and what had become of Frederic? Was he still alive? Yes? Good

"I expect they think I've gone grand and that that is why I haven't sent any money for so long? Is that what they think?"

"No, Therese."

She was indignant. "Oh, so they think I've failed, do they? They think that They'll soon learn better I've been ill, that's all It's not easy to get started again. But once I get a start—"

"That's what I was trying to tell you about," Barbet put in 'Last night I met a man called Cugnot. Do you know him by any chance?"

'When I've made these fools listen to me," Therèse exclaimed, "when at *last* they wake up and see me and blink their eyes to the tune of fifteen hundred francs a week, then I'll come to Roussignac—no, I won't, I'll go to Angoulême and sing there and all of you in Roussignac shall come to me. Victor will come, and I'll sing *at* him I know the song! I'll sing at *him till* he wriggles in his seat, and then I'll blow him out of it."

Barbet waited patiently. "I wish you liked people. Then they'd like you."

"I? Like people? I like almost everything if it has a taste."

"I said people—not things."

"I like people too when they aren't stupid."

"Then perhaps you'd like Cugnot."

"Should I? Listen. I want to tell you something, then you'll understand what I mean by stupid. I went to a place this afternoon to try and get work. I had sung there before. They knew me. And I knew they had a gap in their programme. But it was Eve Charreton who got the job. Do you know why? Because she grovels to them. Because in all her life she has never had one idea of her own. She's polite. She's *tactful*. She has only one word in her vocabulary and that is 'Yes.' She sings, she dances, she thinks—she does everything like an affable, well oiled machine—only with compromise! Oh dear," said Thérèse, "I like the woman too. That's odd, isn't it? I'm sorry. *What were you saying of Cugnot?*"

What appeared chiefly to interest her in Barbet's tale was not the individuality of Cugnot, which interested him, but the idea of Barbet's being in the Écurie at all.

"How did it happen? Strangers who wander in there except on special nights are usually—well, made to know that they are strangers. What did you do? Just walk in as if the place belonged to you and order a cognac?"

"I did order a cognac," said Barbet. A swift astonished smile spread on his face. "And do you know, I forgot to drink it! It never entered my mind until this moment. When Cugnot appeared, waving his arms, I must have put it down somewhere, and after that—"

"*Never mind. Someone else will have drunk it for you.*"

"But I didn't pay for it either!"

Thérèse refilled his glass. "I shall call you Daniel," she said. "You'd be at home in a lion's den. And if they put you into a burning fiery furnace, you'd stroll about like the Shadrach trio and not a tuft of your hair would be singed. And if they shut you up in a Roman prison, you'd just walk out. What is Plence like? I've never

met him It's a kind of côterie, that place—with fringes. Once I was on the fringe but I didn't get in Has he eyes like saucers? Has he eyes like great round towers?"

"In fact," said Barbet, "he has eyes like a very small pig's"

"What did you two talk about? What could you? You don't talk the same language"

"Oh yes we do We talked about you"

"Me? To Plence? He's never heard of me"

"He hadn't. He has now"

"Now tell me," said Therese, stiff with suspicion, "what have you been saying?"

Barbet thought that he had completely forgotten what he had said on the astonishing occasion when he had heard himself become eloquent in the Écurie Plence, but now he remembered not only the substance of his comment on Thérèse but a great part of the words in which it had been expressed, and he began to say them as if he were reading from a book and reading badly Having begun, he could not stop, though the heart had gone out of his speech long before it ended He had expected that his opinions would be violently attacked even that he would be interrupted, but Therese waited until he was done, then said, in a tone of moderation "I could tell you why you are wrong," and was surprisingly silent

He left his argument there and was glad to leave it. She had changed and the change in her was invalidating his criticism

"What are you thinking?" she asked "Why are you laughing at me? Why do you always smile at me like that when I'm serious?"

Before he could answer, her head swung round An envelope was appearing under the door She watched it move and watched it after it was still Footsteps retreated

"That ought to make one curious," she said "It doesn't though," and she stared at the envelope without moving "Oh, Barbet," she said, "I do so want to do ordinary things again. Is the river still there?"

"Why did you say that then?"

She looked at the envelope. "Things coming in on me, I suppose."

Barbet waited patiently "I wish you liked people Then they'd like you"

"I? Like people? I like almost everything if it has a taste

'I said people—not things'

'I like people too when they aren't stupid"

'Then perhaps you'd like Cugnot"

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'Never mind Someone else will have drunk it for you '

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"Forty-eight fifty?" said Barbet in surprise.

Thérèse recounted on her fingers "With what I have. . . This is forty-one . . . Now let's go to Cugnot" But she sat on her bed again "I am tired It's true. I was hungry, you know." She gazed at him "If I had known an hour ago that you would be perched on that chair—well . And forty-one francs come home like a pigeon! . . . I always thought you were my mascot" She broke off her chatter and looked at him seriously "I was your mascot once," she said "I fished you out of the water. Do you remember my *al*batross?"

"I didn't understand about the albatross," Barbet confessed.

"Never mind," she said, "never mind Albatrosses are special. Albatrosses are a *thing* On the way to Cugnot, I'll stand my mascot a drink Where does he live—Cugnot, I mean?"

"Are you ill, Thérèse? Really ill, I mean"

"No I was I'm not now. But I haven't a job and that makes me want to—"

"To—what?"

She shook her head and turned the subject "Do you know," she said, "*why* I'm arrogant? It's because my art is a second hand art It isn't like writing poetry or composing music. That is going on a voyage, my job isn't and I—"

"Thérèse, do something I ask without questioning it?"

"Yes"

"Two things"

"Yes"

"Come this evening—now, I mean, and see Cugnot"

"What will happen then?"

"Plence"

"I see Good Yes And the other thing?"

"One day before I leave Paris—to-morrow or the next day—come on the river with me"

She was puzzled—then understood "For a voyage—by bateau mouche?"

"We could go up river to Charenton or down river to Auteuil"

"I should like that It would be a change" She looked slowly round the room "You are a funny person I talk grandly about poetry and music and voyages, and you suggest the bateaux mouches. You are more unlike me than anyone else More unlike than anyone in the whole world And yet we're the same person Why are we?"

"Well," said Barbet, "so many people stand on their dignity—like Naaman They swear that nothing is any good to them except the rivers of Damascus You and I both take the nearest river—the Jordan or the Seine"

"That's because I always enjoy myself wherever I am," said Thérèse defiantly

"Does that mean that you are happy?"

"I didn't say that I said I enjoyed myself" She walked across the room, picked up the letter and opened it "Well, I didn't think I should ever see that again . . . Forty-eight francs fifty"

belief in voyages was not an isolated faith, "you can say what you like, but for me this is the Pacific Ocean"

'No,' said the little girl without turning her head, "it is the Mediterranean Sea." She stretched out an arm with so much energy that the sun shook on her finger-nail "And over there," she exclaimed, 'is Fréjus.'

An old gentleman, who had been standing a yard away but so still that Thérese had not noticed him, now turned and lifted his hat. Even this was an effort to him, his fingers groped for the brim, it was as if a wax figure had come jerkily to life, and, when the hat was off, it required too much effort of him to put it on again

You must forgive her, mademoiselle She is my great granddaughter It is not her fault that I am so old"

'He was twenty-one,' the child asserted

She means, mademoiselle, that I was twenty one at that time." And before Therèse could speak, he added "No, no, it is not impossible And now what they are talking of is Tonkin I ask you what has a Republic to do in Tonkin? " His bowler was in his hand and he stared at it with surprise. 'On that occasion I had, of course, a white cockade in my shako I remember tearing it out." He clasped his fingers and neatly plucked an invisible cockade out of his bowler hat.

Wave it round your head, grandpapa! Wave it round your head!' the child commanded, and he waved it slowly, on a stiff arm, at the level of his tie And now? What do you say now? Say it, grandpapa!

He shook his head

But you always do. Have you forgotten?'

No he answered, I have not forgotten. But you see, Andree, this lady may not agree with us." He looked at Therese. Something in her face encouraged him 'And yet, after all," he said, "it's a spring morning and this is still called the Pont d'Austerlitz It pleases the child mademoiselle, to hear me say—but you must not shout about it Andrée, you must be quiet!'

'To hear you say what, monsieur?"

'Tell her, tell her'

Chapter 4

IT WAS ARRANGED THAT, ON THE DAY OF THEIR voyage, Thérèse was to take a boat from the Pont d'Austerlitz on the right bank as nearly as possible at eleven o'clock; Barbet, coming from the Jardin des Plantes, would wait on the pontoon of the Pont d'Austerlitz on the left bank, when she appeared, he would join her.

Because he would wait so patiently, she was determined not to keep him waiting, and reached the Pont d'Austerlitz at twenty minutes to eleven. Should she take an earlier boat and, having crossed the river, wait, and let him find her on his own pontoon? But she decided to stay where she was. She had imagined herself, as the boat crossed the river, leaning over the rail and waving to him. She had imagined that, when he recognized her, he would clutch at the handkerchief in his breast pocket and flourish it in the air. Well, so it should be. She wouldn't cross the river until eleven had struck. She would stay where she was.

And she was content. It had been a chilly Easter—or so it had seemed to her, for her illness had been lingering then—but now spring was in the chestnut-trees and small, fat clouds were floating in the sky like the puffs of a royal salute. She went down the gangway on to the pontoon, which rocked enough in the river's movement to change the pressure of her feet from right to left, from left to right, and to give a little twist now and then to the heels of her shoes. She began to smile because she couldn't prevent herself from swaying to and fro, and she said to a little girl who was leaning over the railings:

"It's like the Pacific, isn't it?"

"No," said the little girl, "it is the Mediterranean Sea."

"Well," said Thérèse, delighted to find that her own and Barbet's

his hat And I said to myself I shall remember, and I do remember"

"And you shouted—?"

"Vive l Empereur!"

"And that night at Grenoble? Go on, go on"

"That night at Grenoble there was a woman singing—no, no, Andrée, you must not sing it here."

But the child sang it

> "'*Bon! Bon!*
> *Napoléon*
> *Va rentrer dans sa maison*'"

Thérese, her eyes shining, her voice hushed and deepened by the joys of conspiracy, sang it with her They joined hands and danced together

"That," said Thérese, a little breathless, "gives me an idea for a song Thank you, monsieur Songs are my job, you know This is my lucky day" And she began experimentally to feel her way into a little verse with Barbet's name in it but the form and turn of the child's song The rhymes were haphazard but they would come "Va rentrer dans sa maison!" she concluded "If I can get it right, that song goes everywhere. You can sing it about all the world—living or dying"

"And who is Barbet, mademoiselle?"

"You, me, everyone. What France is and what the French laugh at—at least, they will if I can make them He can be the subject of twenty songs—all different!"

"Where is Monsieur Barbet?" asked the little girl

"Over there Across the river Or he will be soon"

"Then you will be taking this boat," said the soldier of the Fifth

"Not this one The next He's not there yet"

"Au revoir, then mademoiselle I wish you luck in the Pacific."

"And I you, monsieur, in the Mediterranean Sea."

They bowed. They smiled.

"Please, who are you?" said the little girl

"Thérèse Despreux."

"Ah, but Andrée, you have heard it so often before You see," he added, "it happens that I was one of the Fifth Our officer didn't know what to do There they came round a bend in the road and our job was to stop them We were a battalion—right across the road, too The man next to me saw the bearskins 'It's the Guard!' he said. A few Lancers too But even then I didn't see the Emperor When the Lancers came up, we were turned about and began to retreat, but the horses were clattering in our rear Our officer kept looking behind him, he didn't like it, he didn't like it a bit—and I don't wonder, but at last he made up his mind We halted and turned, bayonets fixed And there we stood Then I saw him. Not up to my shoulder—black hat and all The Guard had reversed their arms and he came walking out of them My uncle had told me 'In Russia, the wounded stopped groaning when he rode past' We were silent too There were two birds squabbling in the road, making the dust fly Someone shouted 'Fire! Fire!' Twice If it had been said *once*, some of us would have let off Twice was too much, more a scream than an order, no one stirred Then he stopped 'Men of the—' "

"And what were you thinking about?" the child prompted "You've forgotten that"

The old man was embarrassed "Your memory is too good, Andrée The lady wouldn't be interested in that"

"Wouldn't she? *I think it's the most interesting part*"

"Well," said he, "you will excuse me, mademoiselle, the child will have the whole story But I had been marching, I had been marching a long time, and, since the child will have it, I was thinking that my breeches were too tight in the seat They work up, you know" Then he resumed his narrative " 'Men of the Fifth,' the Emperor said, and then some more I didn't hear He was opening his greatcoat and I saw the green one underneath 'If there is one of you who would kill his Emperor, here I am' That is how to talk to Frenchmen, mademoiselle—the Guard behind you with their arms reversed We came round him We touched him We touched the Emperor, we touched the Revolution, you understand They touched his sword, his boots, and I said to myself I will touch his hat, and I touched

his hat And I said to myself I shall remember, and I do remember"

"And you shouted—?"

"Vive l'Empereur!"

"And that night at Grenoble? Go on, go on"

"That night at Grenoble there was a woman singing—no, no, Andrée, you must not sing it here"

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"'Bon! Bon!
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"Au revoir, then mademoiselle. I wish you luck in the Pacific."

"And I you, monsieur, in the Mediterranean Sea."

They bowed. They smiled

"Please, who are you?" said the little girl

"Thérèse Despreux."

"Are you famous? May I touch you?"

The boat came and went with a great rocking of the pontoon and Thérèse was alone again. Everything is changed when one is happy, everything except the knowledge that to be happy is a kind of madness, that sanity will return as clouds return, that the instant is a gleam—you stretch out your hands to feel the sun on them and you say: there is the sun, I feel it. I am happy. I am alive. Thérèse stretched out her hands and turned them in the sun. She walked into the little shelter that stood on the pontoon. Though its sides were open, a stuffiness of old tar clung to it. She liked the smell and sniffed it. She liked the foolish, friendly advertisements with which the shelter was plastered and read them again and again as though they were personal to her and would not have been there, or would have been in some way different, if yesterday her fortunes had not suddenly taken a turn, if she had not seen Plence and captured him, if she—if to-day were not set apart for her voyage with Barbet. One of them was an omen. There were omens everywhere. The old man had been an omen—Bon! bon! Napoléon—but this placard for pianos was pointing the finger of fortune at her. "Pianos A Bord." A familiar piano, made by the industrious gentleman of that name. But to-day it ought to have meant, and for a fantastic instant it did mean, that there would be a piano on board the steamboat and that she and Barbet would make their voyage to music.

Other intending passengers gathered on the pontoon. When the steamer came, it had begun already to be crowded. Thérèse found a place forward on the port side, and before the river was half crossed became aware of a young man with small, fluffy whiskers who was hovering near her. He supposed that she was alone and it amused her that he should for a minute or two continue to suppose it. Therefore, when he smiled and plucked up courage to say it was a fine morning, she agreed with the utmost friendliness. To-day she was exempt from men, she liked them the better for it, and at this young man, who had elbowed his way to her side like a shy puppy determined to be noticed, she looked without any emotion except of liking for another human being with a gay voice and the sun in his eyes. What surprised her was his response. He seemed to become aware at

once that the adventure he had planned with her would come to nothing His glance came down to inquire what rings she was wearing and returned to her face, baffled by her gloves He decided that he had made a mistake, and strove to apologize without too foolishly confessing a need for apology

"Well," she said to help him, "why should you think you are intruding? It's your spring day as well as mine."

"Yes, madame, but you see I—"

"You wanted someone to share it with you? That isn't unpardonable"

"No, madame You are very kind But, you see, I—I'm afraid I—"

"I wish you'd tell me something"

"If I can, of course I—"

"Why did you hit on me? No, tell me My nose, my eyes, my hat—what was it?"

He took a breath. "It was your back, madame."

"Ah! now you're telling me the truth. And what made you change your mind? You did change your mind quite suddenly Why *did you* decide that I wouldn't do?"

"Madame, it wasn't that! It was only—"

"What made you decide that I didn't *want* to do?"

He threw up his hands. "My God, you are like the Recording Angel!"

"Angel will do," she said "Now answer my question"

"It was—it was—I don't know"

"Yes, you do Did I look married?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Or betrothed?"

He smiled

"Or a nun?"

"I will tell you," he cried "I will tell you It was that you were so friendly, so easy, you looked so happy, so content that I—"

"Content," she repeated. "Happy— And you are not, monsieur?"

At once he fell in love with her and began to tell her the story of his life.

"Now listen," she said "I like you Good bye"

As the steamer approached the left bank, those who were waiting for it on the pontoon began to move aimlessly, a step in one direction, a step in another, and Barbet appeared among them because he was still While they hustled their way up the gangway, he waited then followed them

"What are you smiling at?" Thérèse asked

"It's in your face that you have good news"

"Good heavens, what has happened to my face? It seems to be giving everything away this morning" She looked into his eyes. 'Is it really a different face from the one you found in the Rue Lilas?

"Certainly it is You have had a long night's sleep, and you went to sleep looking forward to to day Isn't that true?"

"That's because I was coming with you on a voyage," she answered "That's because I like being taken charge of I hope you are going to pay for everything Are you? Then it's a real holiday Oh, and there is good news too"

Houses, grey and dirty cream and sepia, flowed in and out of sight as the steamer plodded on down the river The domes of Paris shone, wheeled, vanished and appeared again The sooty arch of a bridge, blotting out the sunshine for an instant, turned all faces upward, to be dazzled, a moment later, by the keen and chalky blue of the sky Meanwhile she told him her news Cugnot had taken her to Plence Plence had been tired and sceptical but had given her an audition She had sung, told stories, performed a monologue.

"A monologue?"

"Well, a kind of play, but all the other actors are made of air I did one about a lodging with three beds in it I am a shop-girl I come in very late. The other two are in bed I begin to talk about the people who come to the shop I work in—the women, and the men they bring with them—and the others talk about men too, only you don't hear what they say—you guess that from my answers, and then—"

"Who wrote it?"

"No one wrote it It isn't written But I made it up It varies a

bit each time. There are dozens more—long ones, short ones—politics, tarts, mashers, washerwomen, thieves You see, I can listen I know how they speak. I can tell Paris things about itself Plence asked me what I called my monologues They hadn't a name, I had to make one up So I said 'They're called Petits Chevaux, after the Écurie Anyhow they will be if you give me a job' He didn't say anything to that. I thought he might have smiled, but he didn't. You're quite right. His eyes do *look* like a very small pig's, but they are a connoisseur's eyes. It's like the first time you strip for a painter, only for Plence you don't need to strip He made me go on and on 'More,' he said. 'More. Another song' Then he stood up and said to Cugnot 'Well, the Grand Prix?' and to me he said 'Good' He made a little cup with his hand. 'You can have Paris,' he said and his fingers closed Then at last he did smile. 'But no one knows it yet,' he said 'That's where I come in Now sit down there. You can appear at the Théâtre Plence six nights a week' I said 'But it's not open six nights a week.' 'It will be now,' he said 'I'll gamble on you, young woman' He offered me a month's engagement and twenty [illegible] ion In the [illegible] After that [illegible] drinks. Cugnot's girl came in to look for him I took fifty francs advance off Plence He liked that Then I paid for drinks He liked that too I didn't think he'd let me pay for them in his own place—but he did Those little piggy eyes! We understand each other, Plence and I I can work for him He appreciates me Are you glad?"

"I'm very proud, Thérèse."

"Proud? You do say queer things. You make me feel as if I were a schoolgirl who had come home with a prize. And yet," she added, "you're only ten years older than I am."

"Anyhow" said Barbet, "having won your prize, you can enjoy your holiday"

It was among the pleasures of their journey that it was slow and that no limit to it was prescribed. They had spoken of going to the Pont du Jour and so into the Bois de Boulogne, but before they reached the Tuileries they heard that they might without delay have

another steamer there which would take them beyond Auteuil to St. Cloud or Suresnes, and at Barbet's suggestion they changed into it.

"Why did you suddenly decide against Auteuil?" Therese asked "Don't you like it?"

"There's nothing against Auteuil," he answered, "but I wanted to go on I have never been by river round the bend at Sevres And anyhow," he added, "I wanted to go on Some day we'll do it differently We will start by train and go to Bougival or St Germain or Mantes and find a boat there But to-day—you know, Thérèse, I was afraid you'd hate the bateaux-mouches, the crowd, the staring and stopping, and—"

"I have a friend," she said, "who owns barges If we went in a barge and took long enough we could go by water all the way to Rouen, and then we could find a steamer and go to Le Havre and then we could find another steamer and go to America, and when we were tired of America we should meet a magician who gave us *one wish At first nothing would happen, and then*—and then we should find ourselves in this little boat opposite the Trocadero Why are you happy, Barbet?"

"Well," he answered with surprise, "in the first place we are in this little boat opposite the Trocadero, *in the second place*, it's a fine day, in the third—"

"No," she interrupted, "I don't mean now—not *now* particularly I mean, why are you a happy man?"

"Look," *he* said, pointing over the side. "*Do you see that?*"

"The river?"

"I mean the wake It's all the same to me whether it's an Atlantic liner or a bateau mouche I like being able to leave things behind Not to be entangled"

"By women?"

He raised his shoulders "Or anything else Property Ambition—"

"I'm ambitious," she said "I'm greedy, *I suppose You're lucky* Your life is all made for you You haven't anything to be ambitious about Are you celibate too?"

"For some time I have been in practice," he answered with a smile "But I'm not in theory a celibate, if that's what you mean."

"Nor am I," she said, her eyes smiling "You don't hate me for it?"

"No, Thérese."

"But you'd think more of me if I were in practice? No, you needn't answer that No! No! No!" she added when she saw his lips moving "I don't want you to answer it. Not this morning anyway"

At St Cloud they hesitated The steamer would go on to Suresnes and they were sorry to leave it, but Thérese's hunger decided them and soon they were seated in an open pergola at the riverside eating small fish from the Seine When their meal was over and their coffee finished, they ordered more coffee as an excuse to sit longer at their pink-check tablecloth and watch the leaf-shadows flicker on their plates, but presently Therèse stretched herself and said "I feel well to-day Let's walk Can we walk? I feel so well I don't know what to do with it"

"Keep it, Therese"

She stood beside the table, her limbs taut, her face alight. "I don't want to *keep* anything I want to spend it. In fifty years' time, where shall I be?"

To this he made no answer, for with the girl who waited on him he had been discussing the further reaches of the Seine—whether there were steamers to be had down river—and she had answered that there was none until you came to Rouen whence you might go by water to Le Havre

"Nothing between Suresnes and Rouen?" Barbet had said, and the girl had answered well, there might be an odd steamer here and there she would ask the proprietor, and now he had come out with the bill and a piece of blue paper on which was written in a flourishing roundhand "Horaire des Paquebots."

"Then there is a morning boat from Mantes to Vernon," Barbet said. "The question is how to get to Mantes."

"To-day?" said Thérèse "We can't go to Mantes to-day And anyhow this isn't the morning"

"But we could to-morrow"

"To-morrow! To-morrow! To morrow!" she exclaimed

"There is only one way to Mantes, monsieur You take the train from the Gare St Lazare," said the owner of the restaurant, gathering up Barbet's money "Afterwards it is a charming voyage, mademoiselle, and worth the journey I have made it myself many a time Until two years ago—until my wife died—we lived at Mantes She was born there Here, yes, it is pretty, it is gay—but the river at Mantes and Vernon—ah, that is something to remember The steamer is not large, but she is enchanting If you are on the bank you hear her coming because the young men play their mandolins Instead of a figure-head she has a great S with a line across it and her name is Gabrielle—Gabrielle d'Estrées And the skipper, his name is Henri, we called him Henri Quatre Tell him, mademoiselle, that you are a friend of mine and he will let you work the engine room telegraph"

They made their way out of the restaurant and into the park of St Cloud

"Last time I was here, the château was standing," Barbet said, looking about him for remembrances of the past

"Where has it gone?" said Thérèse, and Barbet told her that it had not been spirited away, it had been burned in '70, but she did not listen, she was living in the hour and stopped and threw up her head to sweep with her eyes the avenue of chestnuts, as though the sky were her canvas and she painting them

"The great fountain isn't playing!" she exclaimed and turned away from it in indignation, but as they went up the path dividing the cascade, she said, from a long silence

"I wonder whether he will?"

"Who? What?"

She was surprised that his thought had not marched with hers "Mantes Henri Quatre Do you think he will let me work the engine-room telegraph? When shall we go to Mantes, Barbet?"

"I thought you hated plans?"

"This isn't a plan—it's a resolve It's more than a resolve—it's certain, it has almost happened. Do you ever feel that? I felt it while he was talking Sometimes people tell you about places and you know you won't ever go there and so you don't listen That's why I could never learn geography But sometimes you know you will Then it becomes important I suppose I'm being selfish and arrogant? Am I?"

"Well," Barbet said, "there's a kind of genius that selects from life what it can use and spits out everything else"

She laughed at him "Is there another kind?"

"I think there is"

After hesitation, she answered "You mean the genius that knows how to be used, and is proud and humble at the same time"

"Do you despise it, Therese?"

"No," she said "I'm not a fool But it's not for me Why should I let people use me—Plence, for instance? That's what I call taking it lying down I can't take life *lying down* *Of course he can use me now* I don't mind That's part of the game *But gradually*, because I m aliver than he is, I shall use him more *and more, and* some day— Her mind shifted "While the man was talking," *she* continued abruptly, "I saw that steamer quite clearly I could draw *the landing stage* for you and he didn't even mention that It's *no good saying* we shan t go there, because we shall When shall we?"

"Three days from now"

"But Barbet, oughtn't you to have work to do?"

"That will be a Sunday—the day before I go south again"

Therese counted on her *fingers* "Friday, Saturday, Sunday When I wake up on Sunday, *the first* thing that will come into my head will be—do you know that too? You're just awake enough to know you're happy but *not* yet to know why And I shall say to myself Barbet's still in Paris. I have a job And then I shall say This morning I am going to Mantes for the first time, for the *first* time!"

"What do you *mean*, Thérese?"

"Only that it's important."

"What is?"

"Mantes Some day, when I'm very famous and dead, someone will write about me 'That Sunday she went to Mantes for the first time' Will you keep that piece of paper?'

"Which piece of paper?'

"'Horaire des Paquebots'" He took it from his pocket and offered it to her "No," she said "I want *you* to keep it Keep it with that letter of mine you bought from Hurtaux Is that arrogant too? I believe in helping one's biographer—Napoleon did Poor boy, think of him, sitting at a table fifty years from now with a pen in his hand and maps of Paris all round him and photographs and notes and the *words* of songs and—he won't have a chance He won't even have been to *bed* with me! He won't know what the Cheval Pie smelt like and if you don't know smells you don't really know anything And now," she said, "I'm tired of fountains and waterworks and terraces and views of Paris I want to go over there, beyond those trees Do you see that copse with two poplars in the middle like a rabbit's ears? I want to go there and sleep I'm tired"

They went to the place she had chosen and lay down there, not in the shade but in the full sun She lay on her back, her face covered by an arm thrown up

"Even with you," she said, "I tear myself to pieces, talking and talking I hear myself talking I don't really care about my biographer But I say I do, and I hear myself say it, and I can't stop I want you to keep the piece of paper, but not for that reason And the bit about smells *was* true! That is why this afternoon is different from any other afternoon There's a bonfire somewhere, and bonfires are autumn and this is spring Now, you talk to me"

She lifted her head, blinked in the sun and gazed at him

"Talk to me," she said 'You can tell me the truth if you like, though even you make me angry when you disagree with me Tell me a story Or tell me about birds Or why you're not dull even when you say nothing Or why you're not afraid and I am"

"What are you afraid of, Thérèse?'

"I'm not afraid," she cried, sitting upright "I didn't say that Yes, I did, I did, I did I'm afraid because there are two of me, and

they go about joined, except sometimes when I'm asleep. I shall go to sleep now."

She lay down and he was silent. When he thought that, under her covering arm, she was already asleep, she said:

"Say aloud the poem I know best in the world."

"Which, Thérèse?"

"About voyages."

He began: *"Heureux qui, comme Ulysse—"*

"But I suppose," she said sleepily, "that isn't really about a voyage. It's not about Gabrielle d'Estrées. It's about coming home again."

"That is what all voyages are about," he answered.

"Perhaps they are. Say it, then."

"Heureux qui, comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage,
Ou comme cestuy là qui conquist la Toison,
Et puis est retourné, plein d'usage et raison,
Vivre entre ses parents le reste de son aage!

"Quand revoiray-je, hélas! de mon petit village
Fumer la cheminée, et en quelle saison
Revoiray-je le clos de ma pauvre maison,
Qui m'est une province, et beaucoup d'avantage?

"Plus me plaist le sejour qu'ont basty mes ayeux,
Que des palais romains le front audacieux:
Plus que le marbre dur me plaist l'ardoise fine,

Plus mon Loyre gaulois, que le Tybre latin,
Plus mon petit Lyré, que le mont Palatin,
Et plus que l'air marin la doulceur angevine."

When it was done, he believed again that she was asleep.

"You won't go?" she said, stretching out a hand to touch him.

"No."

"You will be here when I wake up?"

"Yes, Thérèse."

"Mantes Some day, when I'm very famous and dead, someone will write about me 'That Sunday she went to Mantes for the first time' Will you keep that piece of paper?"

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Chapter 5

"I LIKE THE MAN," SAID MADELEINE, "AND I DON'T want the girl to make a fool of him"

Cugnot, on the edge of his model-throne, cleaning his brushes in preparation for an afternoon's work, answered that she could be at peace on Barbet's account, he was well able to take care of himself.

"There are chinks in any armour," she replied, "and if there's a man inside you can trust Thérèse to find them"

"Barbet doesn't wear armour"

"So much the worse."

"On the contrary," said Cugnot, "so much the better. He travels light I remember once, when I was in Vienna, going to a performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* I was a boy I had a high standard in fairies, and I thought very little of those on the stage. They skipped and jumped and floated on wires, but you knew very well that if you pinched them they'd squeal, and if you slapped them on the back, they'd gasp like mortals But Oberon was different from the rest. He had been a dancer, I think. When the lovers were chasing one another in the wood, he was among them continually without being visible to them And this Oberon did give an impression that he was invisible and intangible. I remember one moment in particular There was a knot of lovers and he in the middle I remember thinking 'They'll bump into him and that will spoil everything.' [illegible]

[illegible] of him they could ever touch or catch hold of—as if he really were free."

"And you think Barbet is a fairy?" she asked with irony

"Not at all. That's why I like him He eats and drinks and works

'Promise?'

"I promise"

"Thank you Good night"

She took down her arm and opened her eyes 'That was pathos. I suppose you knew I was acting then? Was I? I wish I knew

She turned on to her side and pillowed her face upon her elbow

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"Barbet doesn't wear armour."

"So much the worse."

"On the contrary," said Cugnot, "so much the better. He travels light. I remember once, when I was in Vienna, going to a performance of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* I was a boy. I had a high standard in fairies, and I thought very little of those on the stage. They skipped and jumped and floated on wires, but you knew very well that if you pinched them they'd squeal, and if you slapped them on the back, they'd gasp like mortals But Oberon was different from the rest. He had been a dancer, I think When the lovers were chasing one another in the wood, he was among them continually without being visible to them And thus Oberon did give an impression that he was invisible and intangible I remember one moment in particular There was a knot of lovers and he in the middle. I remember thinking 'They'll bump into him and that will spoil everything.' And suddenly he glided through them as if he were made of air. Through them and back again, in and out, as if there were nothing of him they could ever touch or catch hold of—as if he really were free"

"[illegible]

"[illegible]

like the rest of us, and, unless I'm mistaken, when he was a soldier, he must have been a good man to have in your company It is possible to be free without being a fairy or a monk Good heavens, Cugnot added, "don't I know it myself! I am a liberated being when I drink absinthe Then I am capable at any moment of dying and being born again That's how I know that freedom exists The difficulty is to be free consistently, to be free when you're sober, always to be free"

"It depends on what you mean by freedom," Madeleine said

"That at any rate is plain enough," Cugnot began, but he hesitated, squeezing out the brush he held "It means," he said, "it means, among other things that are perhaps the concern of heaven, being able to put down this brush and walk out of this room and not to feel that I have to return—not to feel that I am on a piece of elastic that will make me want to come back"

"Not even to paint?"

"No Nor to lie with you Nor to bury the dead"

"Do you want that? There's no one to stop you You aren't a prisoner"

"No," he answered "I don't want it Not only that—I am incapable of accepting it I should be afraid of making a fool of myself That's why I need you to look after me But Barbet doesn't, I assure you"

"We shall see," said Madeleine "It's time you began work"

"She's not here yet She's not due for five minutes"

"Who?"

"Thérèse"

"Is she coming? For what?"

"A portrait"

"Why?"

"Because, Madeleine, in a month or two I shall be able to sell it more easily than any picture I have ever painted And because she has screwed out of Plence all the advance she can get and needs money to tide her over And because the head interests me Do you object?"

"No You were painting me It's unfinished"

"I shall finish it"

"You finish nothing You begin and begin. Why do you finish nothing?"

"Because," he said, "though I have a pinch of salt to put on the tail of genius, I am not a great man If I were, your occupation would be gone."

"I believe you are a great man"

"Ah!" he answered, "it is part of your occupation to say so"

Throughout the afternoon, while Cugnot was beginning his portrait of Therese, Madeleine sat in an upright chair, her fingers playing with the tattered fringe that hung from its upholstered arms It was his habit to neglect her, to treat her, when it pleased him, as if she did not exist, and it was her power over him that she could without resentment, and, indeed, with a unique pride, be neglected

Thérèse, as she entered, said at once that, when her engagement began at the Écurie, her life would begin again She would do her hair as it was done to-day, with a plain twist low on the neck, and she would wear what she called her uniform. She had brought it with her In it she would be painted

"If it is what I want to paint," said Cugnot.

"No," she answered, "in that or not at all"

"Am I painting to your commission or are you a professional model?"

"I am a professional model," she replied at once. "I will do whatever else you tell me. I will sit for the figure I will take any pose, however hard, and I'll hold it I'm not an amateur I'll give you your money's worth But if you are going to paint my portrait, then you must paint *me* And this *is me!*" She ripped off the string from the cardboard box in which she had brought her chosen clothes "This is Therese Despreux If you don't paint me in it, you won't be able to sell the picture when I'm famous Why don't you want to paint me in it? You haven't seen it yet."

"My God," said Cugnot, "put it on If I didn't like you, I should hate you"

She put on a taut black dress of wool finely woven, a pair of mittens in crimson silk— "They go," she said, "with the decor of the

Écurie"—and crimson shoes "You see," she said, stroking the long sleeves, "I am completely covered and yet—" She stretched herself within the skin of the dress to complete the sentence 'Now, you choose the light I will give you the pose "

She was a good model She stood upright with a challenge in her body, as though she were about to sing, and, while she stood, she sang in her mind, song after song, her eyes quick with ideas her lips for ever about to move under the imagined words When she was given her first rest, she began to talk at once They knew she had been with Barbet to St Cloud, to morrow she was going with him to Mantes

"At St Cloud," she said, "I went to sleep on the grass Did I *tell you? The sun was hot, right through my clothes, hot on my body* And when I woke up it was gone "

"Well, Thérese, what is the point of that story?'

She looked at Cugnot with astonishment, then smiled 'I suppose there isn't a point for you I'm sorry I leave gaps always What I meant was that hours had passed, everything was changed, the trees looked different, and the smell of wood smoke—I'd smelt it before—but now it was a twilight smell, and I shuddered, everything was so altered, so new and sudden, but he was still there " She had shut her eyes while she was speaking, and now opened them

"You are in love with him," said Madeleine

Thérèse gazed at her "I? With Barbet?'

And, Madeleine turning to Cugnot, said 'You didn't bargain for that Even Oberon was caught by that "

"What do you mean? What are you talking about?' Thérese cried

Cugnot picked up a brush "Why are you going to Mantes?' he said "Take the pose again "

Chapter 6

WHETHER ON SUNDAYS OR ON WEEK-DAYS THE train that gave the best connexion with the steamer at Mantes left the Gare St Lazare at 10 31 At half past ten Therese came on to the platform and found Barbet waiting beside the compartment he had chosen

'What should you have done if I hadn't come?"

"Waited,' said Barbet.

As soon as she was in her place, the train moved out She was wearing a pale straw hat with trailing ribbons of deep violet This she took off and allowed her head to fall back on to the upholstery, at the same time her feet came forward a few inches and small toed boots with uppers of violet silk appeared from under her dress There were little crevices in the leather and over her left instep the silk was split. Remembering this she withdrew her feet

The noise of the train in leaving the station made it impossible to be heard, and Barbet was glad, he did not wish to speak, for her eyes had a dangerous, sullen and hostile brightness like a glaze He felt that he was intruding upon an animal in its lair

At last, in recollection of what she had said at St Cloud, he asked what she had thought of when she woke this morning—had she remembered that she was going to Mantes?

Of course I remembered. If I hadn't, I shouldn't be here, should I?"

There was so little graciousness in this, that Barbet was silent He was in happy mood, he wished to be friendly and light hearted, and the best thing to do with the impatiences of Therese was to wait until they *were over* But she *had* no intention that this impatience should die quietly she wished to spend it She looked away from him, then

swiftly back and away again, expectant of his questioning, and when she found that he would ask no questions, there was nothing left for her to do but to answer them

"I had three hours' sleep last night"

"Why only three?" asked Barbet politely

"Because I had to catch the 10 31 at the Gare St Lazare"

Barbet looked at the back gardens which, at that moment, were passing under his window, then at her The bones under her eyes and the sliced shadow thrown by them on to her cheeks were accentuated, as though she had a fever, and her hands could not be still From the row of spherical buttons which ran between her waist and the spray of black lace at her breast, there sprang out a series of fine creases, like creases in the bark of a sapling, which communicated the spring and suppleness of her body

"You must be very tired"

"Do I look tired?"

"Your eyes, yes, but not—"

"That's absinthe," she said "With Cugnot and Philippe de Courcelet It does me good I'm not a bit tired by that I'm never tired when I enjoy myself But I sat for him yesterday—a standing pose, as if I were singing When the sky clouded over and the light became bad, he had to stop painting We had some coffee and afterwards he turned on the gas and said he would do a drawing of the figure" She waited for him to scold her, and, when he did not, continued as if he had

"I went to him as a professional model I needed the money He paid me I like to be given orders by people entitled to give them There was no question of minding or not minding I did what I was told When I was half undressed, Courcelet came, so I covered myself up and—"

"Who is Monsieur de Courcelet?"

"Philippe de Courcelet! I thought you would at least know that He collects pictures He was in an embassy somewhere—Rome, I think, or Madrid Since then he has been a politician He has never taken office himself He won't For that reason, everyone eats out of his hand They all go to him when they want to know anything

They call him The Barometer. He amuses me." She paused again for a question and, receiving none, continued: "He must be fifty. Almost sixty, perhaps Terribly good-looking—black hair, white streaks and edges, eyes that *look* at you, and vain—so vain it's endearing And no conscience at all. That's a relief. Anyhow he's amusing He looked at me as if"—and she raised her voice on the deliberate phrase—"as if I were an Ingres."

Even this did not stir Barbet to curiosity.

"I stood there with a wrap round me while we were introduced," she went on. "Courcelet and Cugnot began to talk together as if I were a part of the furniture, so I sat down and waited. Courcelet had come in to see Cugnot's canvas of the Gare du Nord and to ask him out to dinner. Then he said 'But I won't interrupt your work. It's early I'll smoke a cigar Go on with your drawing.' When Cugnot said his drawing wasn't begun yet, Courcelet looked at me again and said, 'A new model?' and Cugnot stood beside his easel and picked up a piece of charcoal and nodded at me. So I showed myself, and when I had turned round and stretched and bent and taken some trial poses and stood there waiting for Cugnot to tell me what he wanted, I saw Courcelet's eyebrows go up 'A beautiful body, if I may say so More than a right angle under the breasts and the nipples placed high Extremely rare.' Then he smiled at me. 'No, no, mademoiselle I am, as it were, studying a picture. I consider you as if you were an Ingres'"

She looked at Barbet, hoping that he would be dazzled by this remark, but it appeared to have made no effect upon him.

"Anyhow," she continued, "they took me and Madeleine out to dinner Afterwards we went to Courcelet's rooms in the Palais Royal. I sang for them"

"Successfully?"

"Very Why?"

"A man in Courcelet's position can do a lot to help you"

"I don't want his help I don't want anyone's help. What I do, I will do alone"

There was a long silence.

"He is going to bring parties and parties of people when I am at

the Écurie And now why don't you say that that *is* helping me? I gave you the chance Why don't you say it?"

"Because I hoped you'd get away from the whole subject"

"From Philippe de Courcelet? Why should you object to him? Why should you?"

"I don't I wasn't thinking of him I meant only that there's to-day to talk about instead of last night"

At that she paused When she continued, it was with an increased defiance

"He took me round his rooms and showed me his books When we were stooping over a book together, he said out of the corner of his mouth 'Go away with the others Shake them off Then come back'"

Barbet waited

"I wanted to," she said

"He attracted you?"

"*I like him He amuses me He is so dignified and so vain that—*" She began to laugh and laughed uncontrollably "But I didn't I expect I shall, but I didn't then I stayed, but I made Cugnot and Madeleine stay too But I shan't always Why should I? You think that because I enjoy going on the river with you and because I *was* hungry when you found me in the Rue Lilas, and because it was through you that I got to know Plence at all—you think that it's *wrong of me to—*"

"Thérèse, I have said nothing"

"You think it all the same You think I ought to live like a nun Well, I don't and never have Long before I left Angoulême—before I left Roussignac, if it comes to that—"

"I know"

"What do you know? You think you do, but you don't and it's just as well that you should"

All the way to Mantes she told him of the lovers she had had—how one had served for an hour, another for a fortnight, how each had believed that he possessed her, how she had adored them all while they lasted, how she despised the race of men, how she delighted in their company, their violence, their shames, their flatteries

She repeated their long dead conversations, and described their clothing their nakedness, their most intimate and ridiculous habits, with the relish of a prima donna who tells how the small fry of the stage have existed as a background to her triumphs and humiliations She turned over each episode in her mind with the unresting agony of one whose hoard is of false jewels known to be false She jangled and boasted them, flashed them in her own eyes and in his She lay down upon her past and licked it with the dreadful obsession of a cat licking fur

I think this is Mantes,' said Barbet as the train began to slow down. You will need your parasol It's probably a little way to the landing stage and the sun is hot '

I haven t a parasol I pawned it," she answered ' It was given to me—by the music master in Angouleme It had an ivory knob " And she told again, as though she had not already told it, the story of the music master whose merits had been that he never disagreed with her

'Didn t that make it dull? '

'Dull? Why? I like people who like what I like "

In the street outside the railway station they walked in silence How long will this silence go on? he thought What can I say that will not insult her? He was watching the dust shake on the welt of his boot, when she said You won t believe it now But I am worth loving

He answered ' I do believe it."

Do you? Why? You must be a fool

On the steamer tucking into the opening of her glove the ticket he had bought, she remarked casually, as though it were of no consequence What Cugnot said is true "

What did he say?"

"After we left Courcelet s we were drunk We walked miles. In the Rue de Chazelles we saw an impossible thing—an enormous woman out of the sky looking at us over the ro[illegible]

—

[illegible] laughed and laughed He was disap-

pointed He had thought that it really *was* the end of the world. When he found it wasn't, he became sober and said 'That man of yours, that Barbet, he is a fool He would take the end of the world as a matter of course—which indeed it is' Then Cugnot turned up his coat collar, a huge brown collar His face inside it was white and shiny like a split walnut after you've peeled it. We walked home He took my arm and hugged it to him as if he were cold 'Oh yes,' he said, 'he's a complete fool, he came out of the mirror In this life some condemn and some forgive us, but it takes a fool to know that we are innocent"

"That's mostly fine talk," said Barbet "It's simpler than that. Forgiveness after the event doesn't amount to much Love begins at the beginning, that's all If it didn't, you and I and Cugnot would have a poorish chance at the end of the world But fortunately,' he added, "this isn't the end of the world To-day I'm going to Vernon for the first time"

"Happy?'

He nodded "And you?"

"I'm never happy But I enjoy myself!"

"Why not happy, Thérèse?'

"For the same reason that I enjoy myself because I'm always hungry, I suppose"

In the side pocket of his jacket, his hand closed over a small case containing two packs of cards I wish she'd play piquet with me, he thought, but probably that would bore her I have never played piquet with her I don't even know whether she plays

The paddles were beginning to turn and he did not ask His fingers came upon another parcel which surprised him What a *fool* I am, he thought, I d clean forgotten it, and he handed it to her

"What is it?'

"I believe it's a patch box'

"What *for*?'

"For you"

She unwrapped it 'Oh," she exclaimed, 'lilies of the valley' You are good to me. You are—why now? When I've been bad You ought to have beaten me Why do you give it to me now?"

"Well, that was luck"

"Is it really true," she said, "that you love me? You—*me*? I don't see how you can Oh!" she exclaimed, "I'd do anything for you"

"Well," he said, "would you play piquet with me? We could play on that bench, in the lee of deck house Or would that bore you?"

"Bore me? I like to be asked for things. I do like people who know what they want."

Barbet was not easily surprised by the seeming inconsistencies of men and women which make their pattern, but he discovered with delight a new aspect of Thérèse in the course of that day's journey—a Therèse whose energy of mind was gradually withdrawn from bitterness and rebellion because it was directed away from herself

She asked again how it could be true that he loved her who had nothing, or almost nothing, in common with him, and added another question if he had no ambition and no wish for power, what was he driving at? to what did he look forward? He tried to tell her of his feeling that his life and hers and the lives of his prisoners were parts of a single life which—

"Oh," she interrupted with her old impulse, "I was educated as a Catholic I believe in an after life," but he said that he wasn't speaking of an after life only, but of a present life

"Do you mean," she answered, "that while you and I live our separate lives here, we are at the same time—now, at this moment—living another life?"

"I think so After all, when we sleep, we don't cease altogether to be aware of the waking life we left behind And wherever we are—in Paris, in the vineyards, or leaning on the rail of this boat and watching that barge go up-stream, we don't forget completely the life we left behind when we were born We are living it now, sometimes more, sometimes less, and—"

"If that were true," she said, "the differences between you and me wouldn't matter, and—what would happen to wars and poverty if that were true?"

Barbet watched her eager, changing face There was challenge in her tone, she was sharpening her mind on him and was happy in the experiment

"I don't suppose they'd cease," he answered "It is true, and they haven't ceased, but if we could really feel that other life—I mean, feel it like a pulse beating—we should at least know from what we are cut off by the split in our life here, and in the end we might grow out of it Children fight for toys while they are children—real battles, they value their toys, they are bound to them, and a few years later—there they all are—piled up, disused, in a cupboard"

"My trouble," said Thérèse, "is that I *like* toys I have never had enough of them I don't want to put them in a cupboard"

They had been passing through Vétheuil, the long, cultivated island beyond the town was falling away on their quarter, a small boy, naked to the waist, with blue breeches low on his thighs, stood to wave a glistening arm

"If it were really true," she persisted with stubborn independence, "I mean—if you felt completely that you and I and the prisoners and the birds were all living another common life outside our separate lives here, would there be any point in keeping the prisoners shut up?"

"None," said Barbet

"Then it's not true? You don't feel it completely?"

"It is true," Barbet said, "but I am not a complete man You see," he added, "I am also an ignorant man For a Frenchman, I have read very little, and I am not a Catholic But I shall learn The birds have taught me And you, Thérèse, have taught me"

"I? I have taught you? How?"

"You can laugh at me," he replied, "but you have taught me as the birds have—by being so different from me If there were *only* our differences, I couldn't love you, Thérèse There's everything on earth to divide us and nothing that anyone else could see to bring us together except our songs And perhaps I don't love you as men love women who share their lives, but I love you"

"As a lover?"

"You mean, *do* I desire you? Yes, very often when I am near you, but that isn't what I was thinking about."

"And yet, you know," she answered, "no one would believe that you were thinking about anything else. Cugnot thinks already that I am your mistress—or that I have been No one ever gives me the benefit of the doubt, or would suppose that you of all men could want to be with me for any other reason That's what will be said in Roussignac. 'Poor fool, what does he see in her? He has been bewitched by the tart from Angoulême!' And other people, I dare say, will wonder what on earth Thérèse Despreux sees in you You will be credited with a hundred obscure vices My poor Barbet, if you are to be seen with me at all, you might as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb"

They decided not to go as far as Vernon but to leave the Gabrielle d'Estrées at La Roche Guyon and wait for her return in the early evening As they walked up from the landing-stage, Thérèse halted in the middle of the road to gaze at the castle of La Rochefoucauld. Everything they saw, a light on the trees, a gleam on the river, two pairs of initials carved on the bark of a tree, seemed to them precious and ephemeral, and in answer to the farewell that all happiness begins to whisper as soon as it is recognized, they said to each other: "We will come here again"

"But we shall come here *often*," she exclaimed. "For us this isn't the last time."

And suddenly their melancholy was gone.

"It's the first time Often and often we shall say: 'Do you remember the first time we came to La Roche Guyon?'" and they treasured all they saw, the sharp, scoop-like shadows curled by sunlight under the bridge, the stone fountain at the foot of the slope from the castle, even their thirst—"a memorable thirst," Thérèse said—as they sat outside an inn near the fountain and looked up at the castle and the grass-rimmed cliff behind it and, above the cliff, trees clustering to the skyline with the tower of the donjon looking out of them. She did not then seem divided from him The girl who had boasted of her lovers and flourished the squalors of her life as they travelled from Paris to Mantes was gone; his unease in her presence was gone;

she was no longer defiant, spectacular, clamorous for effect, nor did she talk only of herself and her achievements, but of Roussignac of her father and of the prisoners

"Barbet," she said, "I am happy when I am with you It isn't the river or the holiday, it's being with you I'm sorry Thérèse Despreux behaved vilely on the way from Paris I have left her behind in the train" She looked at him with profound curiosity as if she were examining her face in a mirror "Sometimes," she continued 'I think of you as if you were shut up in your own prison, and it s true—a gaoler is as much a prisoner as the prisoners themselves, just as an actress, though she may think she's ruling her audience and playing on them, is ruled by them A great actress gives out and takes in but in the end they suck her blood They don't suck your blood—the world, I mean That's why you are different from everyone else. Others are tied to something that sucks their blood—fear, money, pride—something You are not tied to any of those things But you are tied to your prison, I don't know why You aren't even tied to me, though you say you love me, though you do love me 'But not,' you said, 'as men love women with whom they share their lives' That is right If ever you loved me in that way, I should suck your blood, and then I shouldn't love you any more"

"Any more?' Barbet echoed

She turned her head away, then faced him 'Oh yes,' she admitted, "I love you Didn't you know? It's only when I m with you that I don't despise or defend myself You have me as I am—even the foolish good in me—and, when you put your hand in your pocket, out comes a little box with lilies of the valley on it'

BOOK THREE

The Doors Are Shut

Ma chandelle est morte;
Je n'ai plus de feu.
Ouvre-moi ta porte
Pour l'amour de Dieu.

"AU CLAIRE DE LA LUNE"

Chapter 1

AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE MAISON HAZARD, Barbet was continuously and happily at work He did not ask himself when he should see Thérese again Perhaps not until next spring, perhaps he would go to Paris before the vintage, certainly months would pass before he saw her, and he was not impatient He had always loved her, though he had not always said so, even to him self, and if now she had said that she loved him, that had been, in her, a dramatic courtesy which bound her to nothing and changed noth ing He had his work to do and she hers, and when a letter came from her describing her first successes at the Écurie Plence he read it a second time in the coopers shed and thought that, as long as they lived, he and she would be separated We are people who are almost strangers except when we are alone together or are far apart In com pany, there are only our differences, it s as if we ourselves, the selves that recognize each other, were being shouted down I become dull and say nothing I should always be an embarrassment to her in her world and she would soon grow tired of mine. That is the long and short of it, our lives don t run together and never will unless—

Barbet straightened his back and let the chip-axe hang idle Unless of course, one day, when we were alone together, at Mantes, for example, or at La Roche Guyon or on the deck of the Gabrielle d Estrées we should both stop arguing in our minds and forget Paris and Roussignac and the prisoners and the Écurie, and go on and go on and not look at my watch and not come back That would be a voyage! Next day what would happen? The skies wouldn't fall I suppose We should be alive and the sun would be punctual and we should wonder why we had been afraid to be together No one would care, people would fuss because they felt they ought to fuss,

but no one would care Someone would look after the prisoners and someone else would sing at the Écurie, we should find work and our lives would go on

To accept life in this way, not to force it, not to plan it but to accept it, was for Barbet more real than to live by what the world considered to be its realities, but he knew that it was only within himself that such acceptances were possible, for outwardly the world's realities were kicked against in vain, they were not to be overridden or transcended by anger or rebelliousness, by any plan, by any act of will, but only by those impulses of nature which, like the touch of a wing on the surface of a pool, trouble the water and send out rings endlessly

Lancret had come into the shed unnoticed He stood watching Barbet for a little while, then said

"What are you thinking of, Barbet?"

"To tell you the truth," said Barbet, surprised to find the chip-axe idle in his hand, "I was thinking about two things at the same time —the spring frosts and the pool of Bethesda The rings on the water You spoke of them once Do you remember?"

"No"

"I had always imagined," Barbet answered, "that rings went out on the water—and broke in little waves on the shore, and I asked did you think they could have been caused by the touch of a bird's wing on the surface? You said it didn't matter whether it was a bird's wing or an angel's, both were natural, both were a part of God If the rings went out and the pool was filled with power, we needn't trouble our heads about the cause, except that it was of God"

"I am glad I said that," Lancret answered 'I must have been a younger man at the time"

"Oh yes," said Barbet 'I wasn't much more than a boy"

"I think it is true, though I couldn't now say it so simply,' the priest replied, seating himself on a bench and twisting an oak shaving round his forefinger "The Bible isn't about conjurors Miracles are not an arbitrary magic but a summoning of those reserves of nature which underlie common experience They are more natural

than what we call nature, that is what is exceptional about them—they are *more* natural, not less"

Lancret looked up to see how his discourse was being received

'You are not of my flock," he continued with nervous defiance. 'If you were, I'd be more cautious. As it is, I'll say what I have to say The skeptical and the credulous—your brother, Anton, for example, and your poor mother—in certain ways they are very alike. It's as if they were living in an enclosed harbour and had forgotten the sea outside. One day the sea flows in strongly, there is an exceptional tide, and one says that it's impossible, that it isn't true, and the other throws up her hands and says it's a stroke of magic Both forget the sea outside and that it is always there and always connected with the water in the harbour, and some try to shut out the sea and to pretend that there is only the harbour, and it is God's mercy that the sea breaks in or the water in the harbour would stagnate. Whatever is not included in their experience—the rings on the water of the pool, the communion of saints, even the love of men and women that does not conform to their pattern of match making—the sceptics and the credulous consider unreal Causeless, magical, bewitched, impossible, absurd—a hundred conflicting names, but always unreal'

Lancret had twisted the oak shaving round his finger [illegible]

[illegible] I know they said it of me. It is wickedness or infatuation or madness or plain folly, but for them it is not love They are always wiser than those who love, and often to their own satisfaction they are proved to be right. The world justifies the world in its own eyes The harbour pollutes its water"

And yet,' said Barbet, "one can't go outside the harbour while one is alive The harbour is the world in which we live."

No, the priest answered, 'one can't go outside the harbour but one can be aware of the sea, one can admit the natural power of God You can't guide the flight of birds or angels, but when the rings go out, when the waters are touched, you can enter into them"

"Meanwhile,' said Barbet, "one goes on with one's work"

"Meanwhile," said the priest, "one goes on with one's work." He strode away a few paces. "I must visit Madame Sernet this evening"

"Worse?" said Barbet.

"Dying, I think. . . . I must go. But she doesn't want me. She only sends for me because she hates me."

"If she dies, what will happen to Frédéric?"

Lancret shrugged his shoulders. "The less work for him," he said

There was much to do at that season outside the prison and the coopers' shed. In the north courtyard itself Barbet had established a workshop, and there he taught his prisoners to carpenter or make barrels, and often worked with them instead of at Quessot's side. But for many hours of each day he was absent from the prison Weeds were growing fast among the vines, and the soil had to be broken with the hoe and broken again that it might be clean always and freshened by the spring air. The young shoots were lengthening—some were almost as long as his hand—and the vine-stems appeared now to be darker than at any other time of the year—black and crusted against the lower surface of the leaves. Soon the leaves would grow and the bistre-green of their upper surfaces conceal the form of the vine-stems, but in mid-May there was no saying whether the vines were green or grey; they were so pale that when the skies were heavy with rain and the lustre went out of the air and all deep colour was deepened and pallor faded, there was ivory in the leaves of the vines and the stems were a pattern of iron After rain had fallen, Pierre and Barbet watched with anxiety the movement of the wind for three or four days If while the soil was still moist the wind moved to the north-west, there was danger of frost, and in the evenings Barbet would come out and sit on his low wall, which was protected by prison and house from north-westerly winds, and hope for a breeze off the river When there was none and a clear sky, he walked through the house into the west courtyard, and old Quessot would look out from the coopers' shed and wait until his return.

"A north-wester to-night, Quessot!"

"Even so," Quessot would answer, "who's lucky with the phylloxera may be lucky with the frosts"

In that month Barbet's fortune held. There was a frost in the third week and Pierre was out early to see the damage—"Too early," said Madame Hazard, "nothing shows until the sun is well up. You think you've escaped, but at ten o'clock—" It was soon after ten that Barbet himself went out to find many shoots burnt and hanging down, the crispness gone out of them, and Renée crying disaster. There was no reason in a frost! she exclaimed. Other vineyards had escaped; the Maison Hazard had been bitten; there was no reason or justice in the frost! But Barbet found that the frost had been capricious among his own vines; many were untouched; and even on those affected the secondary bud, the contre bouton, had not been destroyed and would replace the first.

Chapter 2

IT WAS VICTOR WHO MADE BARBET UNDERSTAND what had become of Thérèse He had been to Paris On his return in mid-July, he and his mother came to supper at the Maison Hazard Pierre and Renée were at table Victor said that he had seen Thérèse's performance at the Écurie

"And was it good?" Madame Vincent asked

Victor pressed his finger-tips together "Shall we say, mother, that it was at any rate extremely successful" Then he shook himself and, with an eye on Barbet, added "No! No! We must not be ungenerous It was—how shall I put it?—it was altogether original Of course upon others the name wouldn't have the same effect"

"What name?" said Madame Hazard

"Barbet's name Didn't you know that? Half her songs are about him Funny songs and solemn songs, country songs and town songs, political skits and—"

"But what does she find to say about Barbet?" Renée inquired

"Enough," said Victor, "more than enough, I assure you She has really been very clever about it She has set him up as a type—a man who finds himself in the midst of the most ordinary adventures, who does all the day-to-day things that are done by thousands of Frenchmen and who behaves always unexpectedly He never says or thinks what others would say or think He is a kind of simpleton whose comments on everything that happens are satire without his knowing it So there you are, Barbet—a famous man! I hope you like it The point is—she can use you as a kind of newspaper You can go to the races, you can go to the salon or attend a debate in the Chamber, you can wander through Montmartre, and there is one very popular sketch in which she points to an empty place at one

of the tables and pretends that you are sitting there. All Paris, as far as I can make out, is talking of Barbet. You have made her fortune"

"Well," said Barbet, "I must say I think she deserves it It takes some doing to make me into a figure of satire and romance Besides, it isn't me, you know, it's someone she has invented There was a lady who wrote to a great novelist claiming that she was the original of one of his characters, and he said—"

"'My dear Princess,'" Madame Vincent intervened, "'my dear Princess,' Balzac replied, 'you deceive yourself Since I created the original, you have become one of ten thousand copies.'"

'Mother," said Victor severely, "you have quoted that before and quoted it differently And it wasn't Balzac"

The old lady looked at him in alarm She was losing confidence in herself and feared that her memory might be failing her He had found that he could always frighten her in this way

"Nonsense,' said Barbet firmly "Certainly it was Balzac."

He felt that it was worth a lie to see Madame Vincent happy again Having contented her, he rose from the table and went out to visit the prisoners

They also had finished supper, but were free in their courtyard, for the heat of the year had come and the cells were intolerable until the sun had been off them for several hours Fontan was under the ilex, the mandolin beside him unused, his feet were crossed, his wrists were supported by his knees and his hands hung slack, he seemed never to blink but to be always watching some distant object that puzzled him. Marcotte had perched himself on a stool at the entrance of the shed used by the prisoners for cooperage and was engaged in his everlasting task of building a model ship

'Something to do I can sell it when I'm out"

He disparaged his ship and grumbled at it, but he clutched it to him whenever Blachere approached and would take it with him into his cell at night At his feet, while he worked, Balze and Heim were seated on the ground, playing a game with pebbles, and at the farther end of the courtyard Blachère stood alone, his hands clasped behind him, staring at the walls. He advanced three paces, halted

and stared, advanced, halted and stared again. When he saw Barbet, he lowered his head and began to rub the seams of his trousers with flat palms. No one knew why he did this and no one except Barbet paid any attention to him, but Barbet knew it to be a signal of approach; soon Blachère's feet would move forward, he would come very close, his head on one side, his thick lips open, his breathing audible, and would be still with a sidling stillness, like a deformed tree.

This evening Barbet passed by the others and went to Blachère, who said:

"What do you want with me?"

"I want an understanding with you," Barbet answered, and sat on the burned grass. "Sit down and talk." Blachère remained standing.

"You are my enemy," Barbet continued. "Will you tell me why? The others are not."

"That is why," said Blachère. "And because you keep me shut up."

"What do you expect me to do—let you out?"

"As for that, I expect nothing."

"And if you went out—what then?"

"I was an animal tamer."

"You enjoyed that?"

"Ah! Enjoyed? Well, it was something. To make a bear turn a somersault is something."

"Why does a bear turn a somersault?"

"Because he finds it is a thing he can do better than other bears. You see," said Blachère, dropping to his knees in sudden eagerness and thrusting his face towards Barbet's, "they are vain—animals. That's what people don't understand. It's not food and it's not the whip that tames them; it's not kindness and it's not fear; it's vanity. You can play on it. It's like playing on a man's conscience. I remember a woman who said to me once: 'You haven't got a conscience, Blachère, that's why you are my master. I can do anything with a man by playing on his conscience. . . .' Now, what was I talking about?" Blachère said.

"You were telling me how to train animals," Barbet answered steadily

"Ah, yes," said Blachère, "animals How did I come to be telling you of animals?"

"I asked you about them"

Blachere nodded "You have a conscience?" he said with a glance like the snatch of a claw

"Yes"

"Then why do you keep me shut up? Would you keep an animal in a cage?"

"No"

"Then why do you keep me shut up? There are men who'd turn the key and shoot the bolts as easy as a cook slams an oven Not you They'd keep a prison because they were paid for it, they'd keep it without a thought, no conscience in them But you—you have a conscience—you're in the cage yourself"

"Someone else said that to me not long ago," Barbet replied

Blachère came nearer, as though he were about to say more, then refrained The seed was planted

"My God!" he said, "I should like the smell of a bear again—and look out if they begin to dribble from the upper jaw Look out then, I warn you!"

He leaned on the ground in silence, his eyes narrow, his nostrils moving, and Barbet found that afterwards, when he was talking to Marcotte of the harvest or to Fontan of the celebrations there had been in Roussignac on the Fourteenth of July, Blachère still had power to visit him and would not be cast out Even when the prisoners were returned to their cells, he was unwilling to share the company in his mother's parlour, and went out into the fields All the barley was not yet harvested, oats and wheat were to come Rains in June had delayed the haymaking, in a few days, with more than one crop to take in, there would be great pressure of work on the farm, and Barbet recalled a project he had had—to release the prisoners on parole that they might work in the fields. Perhaps it would have been, in any case, impossible, Victor and Anton would have resisted it and the regulations have been en-

forced; nevertheless, the thought of it tempted him. But he himself would not have dared to release Blachère. Like the prison itself, the man had power over him. To be rid of his prisoners had been a desire long present in his mind. So long as the idea had been his own, it had appeared simple and good. Now Blachère had, by his prompting, robbed it of naturalness and made of it a temptation to be resisted. He was hedged in by Blachère, and he turned away from the fields into the darkening vineyard and went to the edge of the falling ground from which the river could be seen. The water had no gloss; it was a chalky mist appearing among the blackened trees; and on the marshes the great sheets of wild valerian, light pink in the daytime, were no more now than a pale rubbing of the darkness.

He felt a touch on his arm. His mother said: "What is on your mind, Barbet?"

"Have they gone?"

"Everyone's gone. . . . Are you thinking of Thérèse? Why do you think of her, Barbet? She is another man's mistress—so Victor says He says she is moving from Montmartre, from—what was the street?"

"Rue Lilas."

"From the Rue Lilas to a flat in the Ile St. Louis. And she is the mistress of—I forget the name—"

"Courcelet."

"Then you knew?"

"That isn't the point, mother."

"Then what?"

"You remember that evening in the prison—when the prisoners were ugly, and then were quiet? I don't think I could do that now. I have begun to argue with myself. Nothing tells me what to do or what to be."

"It will come back, my son, if you rest. Sometimes, you know, I begin to argue about God That shuts him out. But he is there. He comes back if you rest."

"Blachère troubles me."

"Ah!" Madame Hazard exclaimed, "that man is the devil Don't listen to him."

Barbet took her arm "That sounds easy But to believe that a man is the devil is to make him so . . . I saw the first families of swallows to-day"

"I saw none. Where?"

"On the telegraph wires."

Early next morning, before great heat had come to the day, Barbet left the labourers in the fields, climbed his tilbury and trotted into Roussignac to collect from Anton money for the prisoners' upkeep and do other business there. Anton's room at the Lion Rouge was empty but a message told him to go to the Hôtel de Ville. Anton had been there and left. Would Barbet please follow him to his private house? Barbet smiled "My brother's flitting this morning?"

"I think," said the clerk, "that he was a little disturbed"

In the house with the gargoyles Barbet found Anton, Bette and Victor assembled They were seated in Bette's parlour, evidently waiting

"Did you know of this?" said Anton, taking up a roll of paper from the floor and extending it before Barbet's eyes It was a placard announcing that Thérese Despreux, from the Éucrie Plence in Paris, would appear in Angoulême for three nights on Thursday, Friday and Saturday the 7th 8th and 9th of August.

"No" said Barbet "How did you get it?"

"It came to me by post," Bette answered

"From Angouleme?"

"From Paris She must have sent it herself"

"Well" said Barbet, "you can't stop her, you know If she wishes to come to Angoulême, she will come to Angoulême. What harm does it do you?"

Victor intervened "Do you suppose she will stop at Angoulême? She will come here"

"And why not? I don't understand, Anton I don't see what's troubling you."

Anton rose

"I am not," he said, "a squeamish man I am not, I hope a proud one I am not one to grudge success to any poor girl who goes out from Roussignac to conquer a greater world But Victor has pointed out to me that, from the political point of view, there may be a certain embarrassment in—" He sat down suddenly "You, Victor, you explain to Barbet what we mean'

"I will explain," said Bette "It doesn't need an oration Within less than a week of her coming, it will be the Fifteenth of August You know well enough though it's the Virgin's fête, it is also the Emperor's, and, though it may be true that the Bonapartists don't dare to come into the open, they use the day, under cover, as an answer to the Fourteenth of July Anton serves the Republic But your family—his family—is known to be Bonapartist Your mother is mad about it—a regular badinguet That has always made it difficult for Anton with the Comités Republicains And it isn't Anton only She sings—"

"She sings," Victor exclaimed, 'about anything on earth—the more topical, the more personal the better Or she might, as Bette suggests, kick up her Bonapartist heels There is no limit to what she may say"

"Not," said Bette, "that we have anything to conceal, but naturally one wishes to avoid unpleasantness"

"Naturally," Barbet replied ' Then be pleasant to her"

"She shall not come into Roussignac"

Barbet shrugged his shoulders God bless my soul, you can't prevent it"

"And where is she to stay? At the Lion Rouge? At the Cheval Pie? Anton owns them both"

"Now listen, Bette She's a determined girl If she has made up her mind to come, you will only make a fool of yourself if you try to shut her out"

"I know, I know," cried Anton in exasperation ' That's what I say If only she could be *persuaded* not to come"

"By me? Is that why I am summoned?'

'Half the songs are about you by name," said Victor "What happens if she uses Barbet to attack Anton?"

"Well, if she does, one laughs and gets over it. But she may be coming for a holiday or she may not come here at all"

"Let us hope so," Bette replied, 'but, if I know her, she has come to show off The question is, Barbet, if we keep her out of the Lion Rouge and the Cheval Pie, will you undertake not to invite her to the Maison Hazard?'

"No," said Barbet

'You are mad!' She turned to the others "I told you it was useless! He is besotted"

'My dear Bette," her brother put in, "you are not a diplomat. You should never ask a saint a direct question about a harlot He always gives the wrong answer'

At this moment a servant entered to say that Frédéric was at the door

"Bring him in," said Anton

He was brought in He held a letter in his hand After a bewildered glance from face to face, he swerved to Barbet. "She is coming back! he cried, his face alight 'She is coming back! She has ordered rooms for Sunday the 10th Two rooms—a bedroom *and* a salon She asks the price"

Give me that letter,' said Bette, but Anton stretched out his hand for it.

"The usual price. Well, go, boy! Take the letter It stinks of scent

Victor intercepted it and sniffed "Good scent but too much of it That is Thérese all over"

Frédéric held out his two hands for it It was laid on them flat, as if it were a brimming dish. He crunched it, held it to him, turned and fled

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"I am not," he said, "a squeamish man I am not, I hope, a proud one I am not one to grudge success to any poor girl who goes out from Roussignac to conquer a greater world But Victor has pointed out to me that, from the political point of view, there may be a certain embarrassment in—" He sat down suddenly "You, Victor, you explain to Barbet what we mean"

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"By me? Is that why I am summoned?"

Good or bad, she overflows Have you ever known a relationship between her and anyone else, man or woman, that hadn't an element of sex in it? Even her father's afraid of her—and he's a priest."

'Do you know what Barbet once said to me about you and Thérèse? Anton inquired 'Shall I tell you what he said? He said you were her enemy because you would rather be admired by her than by anyone on earth"

Victor drew his hand slowly across his lips There was a long pause, after which Anton said in a loud, hearty voice "You are probably right She must be good in bed"

'I didn't say so," Victor answered

'That's why the women hate her," said Anton, pursuing his own thought, 'but they'll go to see her on the sly"

'And you?'

Anton pursed his lips over a breath sharply indrawn "I don't see how I can'

Victor too withheld himself because he knew that it would give her satisfaction to find him in the audience Pierre and Renee could not afford the journey Barbet was held to the prison But on Wednesday Madame Hazard said firmly what she intended to do next day If no one would come with her, she would go alone Madame Vincent shrugged *her shoulders* Chouquette was mad, she must be humoured "Very well, Chouquette, I will look after you"

The two old ladies set out together by the afternoon train They found at the station many inhabitants of Roussignac who, as far as possible chose separate compartments and advanced good reasons for going to Angoulême *not* connected with Therese Despreux. They might or might not, they said, *look in* on her performance 'Nonsense said Madame Hazard They'll all be there They are like me They can't keep away" She looked out of the window as the train started and slapped her knees "I confess, my dear Emilie this is a treat for me. As one gets old, one needs to see a little life now and then' Madame Vincent showed her teeth indulgently "There, there, Chouquette, you mustn't get excited It is a hot day and you will tire yourself"

Chapter 3

A LITTLE TO HIS SURPRISE, ANTON FOUND THAT he was greatly tempted to see one of Thérèse's performances in Angoulême It was in his nature to give credit to success and he was annoyed by his wife's bitterness Bless my soul, he said to himself, the girl has courage—and she may be dangerous His instinct was to conciliate her "Be nice to her," Barbet had said, and Barbet was less of a fool than Bette and Victor supposed

But to go to Angoulême needed an independence of others' opinion that Anton did not possess He found that he was expected to disapprove of Therèse, and his reputation in Roussignac was that of a sound man, a man who did what was expected of him His substantial friends who gathered at the Lion Rouge agreed with him that Thérèse had come to flaunt herself—or was it that he agreed with them or that they and he were echoing their wives? The women of Roussignac were hot against her No doubt she imagined that, because she had had a little success in Paris every house in the district would be thrown open at her knock! She would soon find out her mistake

"It astonishes me," said Anton to Victor, 'that no one gives her credit for wanting to come home with her triumph Even a dog runs back wagging his tail when he has done something he's proud of And yet if I refused her rooms in the Cheval Pie, I should have local opinion behind me!'

"You were wise not to do that ' Victor replied "As long as Courcelet has the ear of the Ministry of the Interior, neither you nor I can afford to slap her in the face"

"Do you want to?' Anton demanded

"N no She is not now in my way But she's excessive, that girl

opinion is my own I have known the girl as long as you ha Chouquette, and I remember she used always to say 'I hate people who take offence.' But she takes offence quicker than anyone I've ever known if she isn't what she calls 'appreciated' Not so much because she appreciates herself Rather because she doesn't She needs to be everlastingly patted on the back 'Say nice things to me, Madame Vincent. Say them, even if they're not true' I used to tell her she had a beautiful nose—I used to *say* it because I couldn't believe she would do anything except laugh—but, no, she was as happy as if she believed it She was so starving for flattery that she did believe it And it's an appetite that grows She may advance but she will always leave enemies in her rear"

Madame Hazard was for a moment without a reply To gain time she said 'I disagree"

'You can disagree or not, my dear Chouquette It is what the world says'

"Ah, that may be, that may be, but it is not what Barbet would say He would not condemn her No, no," said Madame Hazard, lying down in bed and pulling the sheet over her nose with a decisive and final gesture, 'that would not be Barbet's *opinion*"

Madame Vincent gazed at her and hesitated "No," she said in a deep voice, 'perhaps not All the same, Chouquette, it is the world's view of her, and it's the world that puts up statues"

Whoever saw Therese brought home praise or *controversy* By Friday evening, she was famous in Roussignac, *and not in* Roussignac only On Saturday the whole countryside—Saintes, Cognac, Segonzac, Châteauneuf—flocked to Angoulême and returned quoting her and talking like *Parisians* On Sunday morning she sent on her maid to Royan where she had *taken a villa* by the sea, and herself came to Roussignac almost *in* tears of joy because, she was sure, her past had been redeemed She would no longer be thought of as "the tart from Angouleme"—it was, indeed, *for* this reason that she had chosen Angoulême and rejected the *richer* but to her meaningless promises of Bordeaux and Limoges—and she would be free to do what she loved more than *anything* on earth throw her arms round

They went shopping in Angoulême and, as if the town were foreign to them, visited the cathedral and cooled themselves on the ramparts At dinner Madame Hazard insisted upon eating gnlion, a fat pâté against which she had been warned, they went to Thérèse's performance in a mood to be pleased and were excited beyond their expectation They were to spend the night in Angoulême and Madame Vincent came into Madame Hazard's bedroom and sat upon her bed to discuss the experiences of the day

"Some day," said Madame Hazard with generous enthusiasm "there'll be a statue to that girl in the square outside the Cheval Pie She will become the head of her profession"

"She has talent enough," Madame Vincent replied in a guarded tone "But I doubt the statue"

"Nonsense, Emilie, if she has talent enough—"

"But one must know how to apply talent in this world and you know, Chouquette, in many ways the poor girl is such a fool You and I, we have enjoyed ourselves Your round cheeks are still burning with the excitement of it But, admit it—we are tired out we are exhausted It's as if she had seized us by the wrists and pushed her face into ours and shone her eyes into ours and cried 'Listen to me! Listen to me! You *shall* listen to me I am Thérèse Despreux' And she succeeds It is magnificent But you come away dizzy as if you had drunk too much—as if she had forced the wine down your throat She is a pitiless actress and in the end— Besides" Madame Vincent continued without pausing to describe the fate of pitiless actresses, "to become the head of any profession needs undying patience, and she hasn't got it I am told she behaved very badly to that fellow Hurtaux I dare say he deserved it but what's the good of working for months and months and then spoiling it all by flying off for a whim? The girl's too high and mighty She doesn't really value any opinion but her own and she's as suspicious as a street urchin"

"You are quoting Victor," Madame Hazard interrupted "It isn't fair to quote Victor"

Madame Vincent considered this accusation and honestly rejected it "No" she said "Victor may share my opinion but my

such tenderness that, when the words were said, she couldn't help being proud of the way in which she had spoken them, and though, in truth, her words had sprung from a genuine impulse of gratitude, she now observed the rush of tears to Frederic's eyes as she might have observed an effect upon an audience He tried to conceal his tears Against her will, she pursued him

"Why are you crying?"

"Because—because you said it so beautifully!"—a reply that so amused her at her own expense that her face lighted up, all her angers were suddenly thrown off, she laughed and seized Frédéric's hands and dragged him down to the chair beside her and to his astonishment rubbed her face against his shoulder Now, why on earth had that pleased her? He didn't know He had never known what would please her He gazed at her radiant face Anyhow, it was radiant, and Therese, happy, was an intoxication to him The whole world changed its colour He was alive, he smelt the trees, he saw the serrated shadow cast upon her flesh by the ring she wore He could chaff her and feel that all privilege was at his feet He rose, made her a waiter's bow, and asked what aperitif mademoiselle would take before luncheon

A few customers appeared at the Cheval Pie while she was eating —an old, solitary man who was past caring for anyone's opinion of him, three youths who were already so far out of Anton's good graces that they had nothing to lose, and a group of four men whom she knew to be dependents of Bette's and who were, she supposed, her scouts. None approached her They stared, nodded half heartedly and became *engrossed* in their drink The boycott was plain. Thérese's principle was to attack I will go over and make them talk to me, she thought, but she was too unhappy to stir When Frédéric brought her *coffee*, her mind flashed to a resolve to call at the house with the gargoyles, but rain began to fall and she went upstairs and lay upon her bed During the afternoon, Barbet came to the Cheval Pie. She returned a message that she could not see him, then, at the sound of his footsteps in retreat, kneeled upon her bed and looked *out through* the curtains She called Frédéric

This bed creaks."

everyone's neck, forgive her enemies, feel innocent and happy and stand the world a drink.

The world did not come for its drink. She had hired two carriages to meet her at the station, one for herself, the other for a mountain of luggage. She had imagined that this procession would be a joke, she would make the most of it and laugh back and wave her handkerchief and stop her carriage to talk to people who waved to her But no one waved. They were coming out of church and eyed her as though she were part of a circus And Frédéric treated her with a secret, slavish devotion, as though he were harbouring a refugee. His instinct was that she should not show herself and he had laid her midday meal indoors A battle was needed to have it moved into the garden under the plane-trees

"What is it, Frédéric? What have I done? Didn't they like my performance?"

"Oh yes, oh yes, they liked *that*," he answered, delighted to be able to give her this much good news "Everyone is saying how good it was—how very Parisian and—"

"It's not Parisian! Anyhow, it's not what they mean by Parisian! It's my own The whole point is that Paris has never seen anything at all like it before."

Frédéric was silent. When one tried to say *anything* to please Thérèse, she would always fling off into argument against the form in which it was said Whether she was Parisian or not Parisian mattered nothing to him, but it was her vanity to be precise, given a chance, she would torment the word with her emphasis until, forgetting the compliment, she would persuade herself that she had been insulted.

"They said that too," said Frédéric humbly and for the sake of peace. "They said they had never seen anything like it before"

"Oh, they did, did they? Then why aren't they nice to me? Is the Cheval Pie always empty on Sundays at this time?"

"It's fuller in the evening," Frédéric replied.

She turned on him. "That isn't what I asked!" Then, seeing his white face, understanding at last a little of the patience of his goodwill, she said, "But you are kind. You don't hate me," in a voice of

such tenderness that, when the words were said, she couldn't help being proud of the way in which she had spoken them, and though, in truth, her words had sprung from a genuine impulse of gratitude, she now observed the rush of tears to Frédéric's eyes as she might have observed an effect upon an audience He tried to conceal his tears Against her will, she pursued him

"Why are you crying?"

"Because—because you said it so beautifully!"—a reply that so amused her at her own expense that her face lighted up, all her angers were suddenly thrown off, she laughed and seized Frédéric's hands and dragged him down to the chair beside her and to his astonishment rubbed her face against his shoulder Now, why on earth had that pleased her? He didn't know He had never known what would please her He gazed at her radiant face Anyhow, it was radiant, and Therese, happy, was an intoxication to him The whole world changed its colour He was alive, he smelt the trees, he saw the serrated shadow cast upon her flesh by the ring she wore He could chaff her and feel that all privilege was at his feet He rose, made her a waiter's bow, and asked what apéritif mademoiselle would take before luncheon

A few customers appeared at the Cheval Pie while she was eating —an old, solitary man who was past caring for anyone's opinion of him, three youths who were already so far out of Anton's good graces that they had nothing to lose, and a group of four men whom she knew to be dependents of Bette's and who were, she supposed, her scouts. None approached her They stared, nodded half heartedly and became engrossed in their drink. The boycott was plain Thérèse's principle was to attack I will go over and make them talk to me, she thought, but she was too unhappy to stir When Frédéric brought her coffee, her mind flashed to a resolve to call at the house with the gargoyles, but rain began to fall and she went upstairs and lay upon her bed During the afternoon, Barbet came to the Cheval Pie. She returned a message that she could not see him, then, at the sound of his footsteps in retreat, kneeled upon her bed and looked out through the curtains She called Frederic

"This bed creaks."

"Oh no, mademoiselle, I—"

'Don't call me 'mademoiselle' Call me Thérèse. I say this bed creaks It always did My God, I ought to know! Get some oil."

She oiled the springs herself while Frédéric watched. She asked him for his news and about the girl who did the cooking and about Madame Sernet's funeral, but always cut short his answers by a more exciting narrative of her own She began by describing her new flat in the Île St. Louis and the bed she would have there, shaped like a swan, and when details of the furniture had been described, she related her triumphs at the Écurie and told him by what numbers the audiences had increased, and how they applauded, and what Monsieur de Courcelet had said, and how much more she valued the opinion of the girls who thronged the pavement each night when she came out.

"But why do you value their opinion more than his?"

"Well, you see," she said, "they're nicer!"

"But do you think they are when you're not there?"

"I expect so Why not? And even if they aren't, it's what they *say* matters to me."

"I see," said Frederic.

In his company she could enjoy all her successes again. He was a fresh audience and she recovered her spirits.

"What did you say to Monsieur Barbet?"

"That you were resting He will return in an hour"

"Good."

"When he comes, will you go down to the garden?"

"Not at first," said Therèse. She had a salon and would receive him there. "Now I shall change my dress." Frederic took the oil-can and moved towards the door "Sit there," she commanded, "and talk to me." He was silent "*Talk* to me! Very well, if you're dumb, you can help me. This unhooks at the back. But wash your hands first. They are covered with oil"

Chapter 4

SHE WONDERED IF HER DRESS, WHICH WAS DEsigned for company she would have at Royan, was too spectacular to please Barbet, and walked to and fro between bedroom and sitting room, gazing at the piles of luggage and trying to think of something she might wear that he would not notice at all. The sitting-room had formerly been her aunt's bedroom, and she remembered that she had never been allowed to move the bed when the old woman was in it but had been made to crawl under it with cloth and pail A sofa stood in that corner now Thérèse lay upon it and stroked her lilac dress and looked down between the wall and the sofa's edge to see whether the crack in the floor had been repaired It had the shape of a lizard—a rounded head, a long body, a thin, pointed tail She put down her hand and touched it and shovelled dust over its rim; then rose and put on her gloves

This time Barbet drove his tilbury into the square of the Cheval Pie At the sound of his wheels she felt she had been rescued and all her resolves of dignity forsook her She ran on to the balcony of Madame Semet's room, intending to call and wave, and there suddenly, at the sight of Barbet climbing out—the active figure, the square shoulders, the brown hand that gave a standing twist to the reins—a current of tenderness ran down her body and her eyes closed When she looked again, his face was towards her, a moment later he was hidden by a plane tree, then in the open, talking to Frederic, and it pleased her to watch him, who had not seen her She went downstairs slowly, afraid that, when she appeared in the garden he might, in his wish to be kind, speak of the failure of her coming to Roussignac and try to console her with little lies, and she did not wish to be consoled, her desire for local triumph no longer

existed, it seemed never to have existed, the subject was dead in her mind, she had passed beyond it and wanted only to be near Barbet and feel his eyes upon her At the foot of the stairs she heard Fredéric say "She said she would receive you in her salon, Monsieur Barbet," and guessed Barbet's smile as he answered "Well, Fredéric, I can't pretend not to know my way, but I think you had better go up first and announce me"

"No you needn't," Therèse cried Then, face to face with Barbet "You did climb three flights of stairs to me once Do you remember?"

"Rue Lilas," said he

"And what was the first thing we did?"

He looked at her, puzzled "We talked a bit and then—"

"No," she interrupted, "the *first* thing we did was to have a drink Fredéric!" In a moment she was sitting at the table at which she had eaten her solitary meal, but now Barbet was opposite her and she his hostess When Frederic brought a carafe of wine, her hand went to it before Barbet's, it was she who filled the glasses, and, as she set down the carafe, her hand rested an instant on the table, she had thought, not that he would touch her, but that she might, for that instant, permit herself the imagination of his touch Instead he drew back and her heart was chilled by ridiculous disappointment, he drew away with a grinding of his chair in the dust, and she followed him with her eyes, possessed by a superstition that, if he went from her now, though it were but to call Frédéric or to find a thicker shade from the plane tree, he would be irretrievably gone, and when she saw that he was lifting his chair and moving it to the end of the table so that he might be nearer to her, when he was seated again and reached for his glass and touched hers with it the clink of the glasses ran down to her elbow, it seemed to her that a miracle had happened, she smiled and closed her eyes and said her prayer to St Antoine, then opened her eyes and looked at Barbet as though she had been blind and were now seeing him for the first time

"Why, Thérese?"

She answered his question with questioning eyes, then put away pretence of not having understood it. 'Only that I'm happy," she said 'Are you going to Royan for the Quinze Août?'

'No'

'But everybody does Anton will go and Bette and the Vincents—everyone Why not you?'

'Pierre and Renée are going"

'But you could go too There's no work in the vineyards"

"I have my prisoners'

She let this go unanswered, having begun to speak of Royan only because Courcelet had appeared in her mind He and Cugnot and Madeleine—perhaps Plence also—would be her guests at Royan, it was possible because, though life at Royan during August was very gay, it was also very simple, and a few weeks ago, when the plan was made, nothing had seemed to her more delightful than to spend her savings in this way and in this place where the wealthy shippers would send their sons with a fine horse and a buggy, where the solid proprietors would go in the hope of mixing socially with these grand gentlemen of Cognac, and where the whole countryside would pour in by the excursion trains on the 14th August to sleep where they could—at inns, in the woods, on the beach—and play cards and eat in the open and make love and make music and *stare at* [illegible]

[illegible] made friends on the beach with strange children who knew nothing against her When she had fallen on her face while paddling no one had been angry, she had sat naked inside her mother's coat while her own clothes were dried in the sun She had pulled up the coat like a hood over her head, inside was the smell of her mother and through the collar the sunlit beach had appeared in a frame. In other years they had been too poor to go to Royan, and Therèse had held it in her heart To have a villa of her own there, if only for a fortnight, to entertain her friends from Paris, to be seen and recognized by everyone—in a word, to promote herself visibly from the beach to a phaeton and a pair of horses had

seemed to her the surest of all proofs that Thérese, the priest's daughter, had indeed become Thérese Despreux, and now she told Barbet of her plans with a child's pride but with a child's fear that he might discover a flaw in them If he had said that she was being *ostentatious or foolishly extravagant, she would have flared against* him A thousand eloquent defences were ready on her tongue But she had use for none of them He asked only where her villa stood and whether it had a garden and what was the colour of the horses she had hired, and when she said that they were white, he answered "White horses and your lilac dress"

"But you won't be there?"

"No," he said, "I must stay with my prisoners And now, if you're ready, shall we drive home? My mother is expecting you to supper, and the prisoners are expecting theirs"

She looked at him in mock indignation and made one of her faces of despair "You too!" she exclaimed

"I too? What have I done?"

"What have you *done!* I have a song about that

"'*Stay at table till* I've *finished*
Stay in bed till I'm *awake* '

Sometimes I think I must be the only person in the world who knows how to live in the moment Everyone else is always thinking of the *next* thing Templeraud does Templéraud is a young man I've discovered to write tunes for me While I want him to work at one, he begins to whistle the next Courcelet's as bad He discusses the Chambertin while we are drinking the Pouilly, and as soon as his head is on the pillow he begins to wonder about his engagements for the next morning" She began to sing quietly the tune that Templeraud had written for her—a gay tune with a mock melancholy and a sudden twist in its last verse

"Stay at table till I've finished
Unless thou art the angel Death
None but he shall steal my pleasure,
None but he shall stop my breath

Do not forsake this moment
For the doubtful years to come,
Who looks beyond his instant
Enters his tomb

And there," she cried, "they think it's ended They begin to applaud And then I turn on them—

"Do not applaud my singing
Till I myself am dumb!

You see? That shows them! . . . Now, if you are ready, shall we drive home to supper?"

Courcelet and the white horses were still in her mind as she sat back, erect, under the hood of the tilbury and waved to Frédéric. She did not repudiate the expected delights of Royan because she was differently happy in Barbet's company, and it was part of the pleasure of being with him to know that he was not shocked by aspects of her life in which he had no share With him she felt no need either for defensive boasting or for concealment, and, as they drove out of Roussignac by the road bordering the Long Wood, there came to her a sense of confidence and well being, of not being alone in the world All her bitterness against Roussignac and her disappointment left her and she touched Barbet's arm and said

"Thank you"

"For what, Thérèse?'

"For making me feel as I do"

'How is that?"

She hesitated for a moment. "You make me feel you are glad to be with me You did in the Gabrielle d'Estrées You do always"

"I have often imagined you on that seat beside me," he answered, 'so clearly that it has seemed possible to put out my hand and touch your arm as I touch it now"

Though the sun was aslant and long bars of shadow lay across the dust, the great heat of August hung in the air and when the road inclined upward, the curve at the level of their eyes shimmered and

broke The pony drooped his head and trudged forward on a slackened rein

"Could we get out and walk for a little while?" said Thérèse "Perhaps to the top of the hill" They climbed down on the springy step and walked at the roadside, where the blue of the lucern flower appeared among the dark green of its shoots Thérèse stooped to turn the flowers with both her hands, and, as she did so, a grass snake came out of cover and began its journey across the road, leaving a zigzag trail in the dust

"He has a long way to go before he reaches the meadows" she said, and was still, her eyes fixed, following the snake in her mind, how he would go through sun and darkness until he came to the river While she stood, Barbet came to her and took her in his arms The pony had halted at a distance, and Thérèse, as her eyes closed, saw the radial shadows of the wheel-spokes lie across the dust like the ribs of a fan An instant later, when he had kissed her, she opened her eyes and recognized them again Her hand was in his hand, she was at peace, not greedy for time, without fear even of its passing, and it was without anguish that she saw that time had passed, the grass snake was gone, its track only remained As she and Barbet approached the tilbury, the pony began to move forward Barbet called to him to stand, they climbed again into their seats For the rest of their journey to the Maison Hazard, they talked at ease but seldom, there being a natural repose in the cooling sky and in their nearness to each other

Madame Hazard had heard the sound of their wheels and was at the gateway of the south east courtyard to welcome them The deaf woman, the widow Garbut, looked out from the door under the vine to say that the prisoners' supper was cooked, and Barbet, leaving Thérèse with his mother, remounted the tilbury and drove it round the house to the stables in the west courtyard

"We shan't see him again for a little while," said Madame Hazard "The men must be fed, and ten to one he'll stay and talk to them Our own supper must wait"

Before their coming she had been sitting in the wall shade near

the pomegranate tree and thither she now returned, offering Thérèse a straight wooden chair beside her

"There is something I have to say to you," she began at once "I was thinking of it as I sat here When Thérese comes, I said to myself—and now your coming has put it clean out of my mind"

"It will come back," said Thérèse, "if we talk of something else," and she asked how the harvest had been and whether the Hazard vineyards had still escaped the phylloxera

"Of course they have," said Madame Hazard Then, recalling that the family miracle had not been complete, she added "There was a patch on the high ground Barbet dug up the vines and burned them and burned every vine within twenty-five metres There has been no more" She looked at Thérèse in troubled silence, unable to remember the subject on which she had wished to speak At last she attempted another "Madame Vincent and I saw your performance in Angoulême For my own part, I enjoyed it without reserve—without reserve," she repeated in an emphatic, querulous tone as if her opinion were being challenged "How you remember the words is what puzzles me So many words! So many words! Do you know, I could often have thought you were making them up as you went along I suppose you weren't? Is that a silly question?"

"I wasn't making them up," Thérese answered. "But I'm glad you thought I was."

Madame Hazard sighed "I can remember singers who sounded like a musical box. I can remember actresses who seemed always to be acting to the wall behind me But you, Therese, you made me laugh and cry inside myself because you were whispering into my own ear" She began to chuckle and silently to clap her hands "I expect it was that which upset Madame Vincent"

"Oh, was she upset?"

"She is very dignified," said Madame Hazard "She don't like anyone to come too close. She don't like anyone to tickle her ear. Of course one or two of your songs were Barbet's own songs; I've heard him sing them about the house, and you've changed 'em All except one"

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"Which?"

"'As I was going up the street' You sang that *his* way"

"I never change that," said Thérèse "From the very beginning I have never changed that That was why I quarrelled with Hurtaux"

"Good," said Madame Hazard, "I like them better as they were But I'm out of date, perhaps, and perhaps I'm a silly old woman' She stared at Thérese with wide, unblinking eyes and said "They think, of course, that I am sometimes a little mad?"

It was almost an interrogation Thérèse felt that a reply was expected of her "The world is so sane," she answered, "that sometimes it is necessary to be a little mad"

"Poor Emilie is sane," Madame Hazard said gravely and with the compassionate emphasis she would have used in speaking of a disease "She believes nothing she has not been taught, and if anything from outside, anything unexpected, your performance, for example, makes a strong impression on her, she at once begins to explain it away My poor husband was like that When he was a little drunk, instead of enjoying it, he would always explain that it was not so He would say there was a rim of pressure above his eyes, and soon he would take out his watch and show it to me and ask whether I knew that in 1836 it had cost eleven hundred and twenty francs Now, what was I saying? Ah, yes, poor Emilie!" But she could not remember what she had been saying about Emilie Small grunting noises of irritation came out of her silence "Bless my soul!" she exclaimed, "there was something I had to say to you and certainly it wasn't about Emilie"

Thérèse tried to help her "Was it about my coming to Roussignac?"

"No," Madame Hazard replied, "it was about the kingdom of God" She was on the scent, her voice rose, her face brightened—then clouded again "But there are so many things to say about the kingdom of God," she continued sadly, "one hardly knows where to begin If only Barbet were here—" and suddenly she threw up her head in joy, sniffing the air "Of course," she said, "it was of Barbet I wished to speak" She looked into Thérèse's eyes.

"I think you are a young woman capable of telling the truth. Answer this. Do you intend to marry Barbet?"

Thérèse looked at her incredulously. "Marry!" The question was fantastically opposed to her own idea of her life in Paris but it made her catch her breath. "Do not fear," she exclaimed. "We shall not. We shall not. We shall not." She felt a pulse stir in her throat as though there were wings in her blood, and she held her body against the throb of pain within her. "What on earth put that idea into your head?"

Madame Hazard rose to her feet. "Now there are a few things I must attend to before supper. Will you stay here or come into the house?"

Thérèse chose to stay and, when she was alone, seated herself on the low wall by which the courtyard was enclosed. A mewing cry drew her gaze upward to a family of buzzards circling above the vines. As she watched their smooth, grave flight, and felt the heat of the stone wall under her hands, she remembered the words she had spoken to Madame Hazard and tried to interpret them. No man was freer than Barbet; he was freer than the rich or the ambitious or the hungry or the timid; neither possessions nor desire nor fear for the future imprisoned him; yet she had said that he was a prisoner and, in speaking, had felt it to be true. A prisoner of what? She shrugged her shoulders in attempted indifference. She wasn't his keeper, she had troubles enough of her own, but she knew that he also suffered, though his expression was normally that of a happy and unburdened man, and her question persisted. If I were near him, she thought, I should know what it is that holds him; if I were near him I—and she put her hand to her throat, she saw again the shadow of the wheel spokes lie upon the road like a fan. Good God, she said, when will you learn, Thérèse Despreux? Are you fallen in love again? The buzzards' mounting circles had carried them out of sight. Over the empty cornfields, in the direction of Pierre and Renée's cottage, a troop of grey brown corn bunting swept low, crying "quit ... quit" and a loud "quit." When they were gone, there was unbroken silence, the deep, torpid silence of an end of an August afternoon, until four little birds of olive brown with white

bands across their wings appeared on a branch within a few yards of Thérèse, carrying her mind back to a day of her childhood on which she had been standing at the edge of the Long Wood with her mother and Barbet and the priest They had been talking together and she listening to the migration call of these little birds, who passed in great numbers Sometimes they had come to rest near her, she had pointed and asked their name. Her mother had shushed her, the priest had not heard, and it was Barbet who had told her that they were pied flycatchers and, taking her hand in one of his, had stooped quickly down and pointed from the level of her eyes to another bird, perched high on the yellow flower of the Jerusalem artichoke, which, he had said, was a whinchat The name she remembered and the excitement of watching the sway of the yellow flower, but the bird itself she had forgotten

There was a sound of footsteps behind her She turned, expecting to ask Barbet what a whinchat was like, but it was the priest, her father, who had entered by the gateway, and she was suddenly hot, the colour high in her cheeks He had followed her to the Maison Hazard, but to encounter her alone was unexpected, and he stood before her like a guilty child, unable to take her hand until she moved forward and gave it to him Thérèse had no small talk, it was her way to break silence by an abrupt plunge into the subject of her own thought, and now she surprised the priest and herself by saying

"He has gone to feed his prisoners"

The priest nodded "You passed me on the way—in the tilbury"

"Passed you? Not on the road?"

"I was on the path, inside the edge of the wood"

"Where?"

"You stopped soon after"

She considered this "The grass snake must have passed at your feet"

And he answered "I didn't see a grass snake"

She smiled and turned with him to the chairs under the pomegranate tree "His mother was here with me She has gone in to see to supper Are you staying to supper?"

"If I am asked"

"Then she had better be told you are here."

He put a hand on her arm 'No Stay. I have a standing invitation Stay a little while"

She leaned back in her chair and waited

"Then it is true, Thérèse?"

"What is true?"

"What they say"

"What do they say?"

"That he visits you in Paris. That you and Barbet—"

"Are you blind?' she exclaimed "You saw with your own eyes! It was the first time he had ever held me in his arms. . . . Do you believe me?"

'Yes," said Lancret "And what does it lead to?"

"The old question what does it lead to? Can no one live in the moment?'

"No one can stay in the moment, Thérèse. It is already past."

She shook her head "There's this evening There's still supper to come. Hours and hours and hours. All of this evening is one moment'

"Are you as unhappy as that?" he asked

'I? Unhappy?"

"If a few hours this evening mean so much to you—"

"Not unhappy Lonely," she said. "This is a special place. It isn't Paris. It isn't Roussignac. It's a special place."

He insisted no further and folded his hands.

"When you are sitting beside me, as you are now, which do you feel," she asked, "my father or my priest?" and Lancret knew that the opportunity to serve her, for which he had prayed so long, was coming to him, the test of his capacity was coming, in what form he did not know, and, without unfolding his hands, he made in his mind the sign of the cross, and prayed silently Give me wisdom Give me charity Give me words.

"Why do you ask that?" he said "To provoke me?"

'Oh no, oh no," she cried. "Why should I wish to provoke you or anyone? I am not a wild beast. I have a question to ask

I don't want your prejudice as a man I want your answer as a priest"

"You wish to confess"

"If I did I should have said so I want what I say I want, an answer to a question . . I'm sorry, I'm sorry," she added "I sound impatient, I know"

Lancret controlled himself He put irritation from him and calmed himself "I will answer as a priest," he said "Ask what you will"

"It is this," Thérese replied "Barbet is a good man, innocent—innocent," she repeated, "almost a sinless man"

"Let us say that he is good," Lancret intervened "The word may be allowed to explain itself"

"And he is happy," Therese continued "That is why it is peace to be near him—because he is at peace himself, and, in that way, happy It's in his face And yet, sometimes—I saw it just now as he went off to feed his prisoners—sometimes his face darkens The creases at his eyes tighten, his look goes away from you—back into his own mind—the look on other men's faces Shut in Held What is it? What holds him—him of all men?"

"Modesty of spirit," the priest answered "Shyness before God"

He heard his own voice say these words instantly as though his answer had been long prepared, but when Therèse asked what he meant by them he could not at first reply It was as if he had opened a book at hazard and read these words aloud and must now seek their context He stood up and, to steady his mind, walked away from Thérese to the low wall, where he stood, looking across the river to the hills of the Grande Champagne, striving to interpret the words which, he believed, had been given him This belief he recognized as a temptation to his pride, he had prayed for words, they had been put into his mouth, he might now, if he would, turn them to his own purposes and twist them with intellectual subtleties, for he was envious of a spiritual quality in Barbet that he himself was without and to reveal a flaw in that quality would compensate him Therefore, when Thérese had followed him and stood at his side, to protect himself against this temptation and put envy behind him he

said "I love the man He is nearer God than I I will not speak against him" But as he said this, it entered his mind that he might speak of Barbet in terms of his own defect, and he continued. "Every sin has its opposite. Even spiritual arrogance has its opposite in an excessive modesty of spirit, the remedy for one is humility, for the other exaltation Barbet is limited—or, as you say, imprisoned—by his refusal to recognize anything exceptional—any exceptional power and therefore any exceptional duty in himself He is like a man fitted to command who wishes always to remain a private soldier, or like a child of rare talent who says always, 'I am not different from the others in my class.' There was an evening when his prisoners were dangerous and he went in to them unarmed and quieted them and they obeyed him But you were there, Thérèse, you saw it."

"Yes," she answered "There was nothing spectacular in that It happened quite naturally"

"That is why it happened at all," the priest answered, spreading out his hands. "Barbet did not guess that he was doing anything exceptional If he had known that he was doing what credulous fools might call a miracle, he would have shrunk from it All his life is a refusal to be conspicuous—I do not mean conspicuous to others, he is not afraid of opinion, he is scarcely aware of opinion, I mean a refusal to be conspicuous in his own eyes, to claim any exemption for himself, even to think of himself as different from others He retreats so far from the introspection by which the rest of us are flattered, from all the sins of intellectual or spiritual pride which beset us, that he is bound by his own simplicity He cultivates his vines, makes his barrels, *looks after* his prisoners All these things his father did and it is not enough Barbet is not his father, but he makes his life conform to the outline of his father's as if it were in some way presumptuous to excel him, even to differ from him He compels his spirit to inhabit too small a house, Thérèse"

"Have you told him so?"

"Never, I am not his priest"

"But as a man a friend"

Lancret hesitated. "Until you asked your question," he replied,

"I did not know what I have just said 'Modesty of spirit Shyness before God' I have never used such phrases or heard them used to describe an error But it is true—he inhabits a house too small for him If, as you say, he is sometimes unhappy, it is because he is beginning to know it Perhaps it is you, not I, who can help him"

Barbet came from the house carrying a tray on which were plums preserved in cognac and a bottle of pineau Thérèse disliked pineau, the mixture of cognac and unfermented wine was too sweet for her taste; but this evening she accepted and enjoyed it Madame Hazard followed her son Supper had long been ready She scolded him for having delayed with his prisoners and at once there came into his eyes that expression of confinement and battle of which Thérèse had spoken She looked into the priest's face, wondering whether he had recognized it, but he was supping the juice of his plums

They sat down to their meal in the old kitchen now no longer used for cooking In the fireplace was an iron backing with a figure of Bonaparte mounted, and above the mantelshelf a gun supported upon a rack of goat-horns The walls were thick, having deep cupboards built into them, and the room was cool Over their food they talked of food, then of Blachère and Fontan—a subject from which Barbet turned away, then of the experiments that were being made in grafted vines, then of Paris, of Royan, of the whinchat and the pied flycatcher—a roving conversation skimming the surface of all their minds Daylight fell into this room through narrow, embrasured windows Its shafts wheeled and faded on the brick floor When darkness was near and Madame Hazard would have had them move into the parlor, Barbet said "Shall we stay here, mother? Thérèse and I will clear the table You can have your game in here" To be so little a stranger that she might carry dishes and bring cards and candles delighted Therese She and Barbet played piquet at one end of the table, Lancret and Madame Hazard at the other Their voices, falling upon the silence, seemed not to break but to accent it, and she said

"Do you always play in the evenings with your mother? At this time, I am at the Écurie"

Barbet held his cards against him and listened, then continued his game. Thérèse knew that his imagination had carried him into the cells with his prisoners, and when their game was done, the players at the other end of the table still continuing, she was content to sit opposite him, wordless, and to watch his face. As long as he and she might sit thus and the priest and Madame *Hazard* mutter and exclaim over the slap and patter of their cards, so long would this stage of the evening last, and Thérèse found rest in it; she did not want time to move forward into questions and action; she wanted to be as she now was, near to him and silent, still living in the very evening in which he had first taken her in his arms, not looking back upon it as she would to-morrow look back out of her own separated experience, but lodged in his life, a part of his actual *recognitions*. Nevertheless she began soon to try to engrave upon her memory his face as she now saw it, and the attempt, because it was a clinging to time, frightened her; she lost her hold, her mind leapt forward; she wondered whether Plence would travel *to* Royan with Cugnot and Madeleine and whether the wine she had *ordered* a month ago would have resettled well enough for Courtelet to drink it. Madame Hazard's game was done and Therese said to herself: The evening is over! It is all *over*! *While* the others were putting away the cards and Madame *Hazard* bringing out a bottle of wine with which, she said, to crown the evening, Therese went from the room across the covered way and into the

time like a child whose

the glasses of wine whe

a farewell, perhaps th

In the courtyard un … starry sky, she wandered, stood, looked up, wandered *again*. She counted seven stars. Never had she achieved the counting of *seven stars on* seven successive nights; if she did, her wish would be *fulfilled*, but now she had no heart for her *habitual* wish, which was for herself, and no language *to* wish for him. Instead she remembered the evening on which she had sung in the other, the prisoners …

… in her and converted her

"I did not know what I have just said. '*Modesty of spirit. . . . Shyness before God*' I have never used such phrases or heard them used to describe an error. But it is true—he inhabits a house too small for him If, as you say, he is sometimes unhappy, it is because he is beginning to know it Perhaps it is you, not I, who can help him"

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Chapter 5

THÉRÈSE OBEYED HER IMPULSE TO LEAVE ROUSsignac next morning and so came to Royan before the house was prepared for her. Her maid, Charlotte, and Bridier, a cook of Courcelet's who had been sent in advance of his master, occupied it, and, as soon as they perceived that Thérèse was in an undemanding, almost a submissive mood, and had not the energy to quell them, they made her unexpected coming an excuse for serving her as little as possible. Rooms that might have been uncovered were left under dust-sheets, her meals were "simplified," even the milk for her morning coffee was brought without a strainer until, in a flash of rage, she sprang out of bed, seized a hair brush and would evidently have used it if Charlotte had not fled from the room. The girl returned with the strainer and began to make excuses: there was so much to do in the house before the guests came; she and Bridier had expected to have no one to wait on until Thursday. Thérèse, in bed again, did not raise her eyes. She poured out her coffee and seemed not to be listening. "Go away," she said.

That day, her third at Royan, she spent in a mood of despondency. When the carriage and the white horses she had hired were brought for her inspection, they neither pleased nor displeased her; they were part of the conversation she had had with Barbet, and, after her eyes had fixed upon them, she wrenched herself away without giving the coachman orders. He waited half an hour before driving them back to the stables.

In the afternoon she went on to the beach with a rug over her arm and writing materials *in her hand*. She would not write to Barbet, but she might at any rate send a letter to Frédéric, and she wrote the envelope first because her pencil was eager for the word

song She shut her eyes, struggling for the words of her song as she had done formerly, but now, when she opened them, there were no prisoners She felt her hand taken and heard Barbet say "What are you doing, Thérèse? Counting the stars?' She was glad to go indoors with him and drink the wine that Madame Hazard put into her hand

"I will drive you and Thérèse into Roussignac," he said to Lancret "It will be time enough to go the rounds when I come back'

The three of them were pressed together in the tilbury The evening was already ended Little was said

"That is where we saw the grass snake," said Thérèse

Lancret was put down at his house At the Cheval Pie, Therese would not allow Barbet to leave the tilbury She was exhausted and feared that they might stand opposite each other, trying to say good night, trying to prolong what could not be prolonged

"No Stay where you are Please stay where you are" With sudden resolution, she added "To-morrow I shall go to Royan Good-bye"

"Good night, Thérèse"

She had turned away when his voice followed her

"Thérèse, tell me something When I came out into the court yard, what were you doing? Your lips were moving"

"Oh," she said in an abrupt, hard voice, as if she were mocking him, as if she wished to sting and hurt him, "I was emptying your prison for you"

"You can't do that Only I could do that"

"That is true"

She thought he would say more, but after a moment's hesitation he said good night, gathered the reins and drove away

mission of his life to hers—a heroic resolve, so improbable in its self abnegation that she curled her lip at it She knew what would have been said of it by the girl who had travelled with Barbet in the train to Mantes or by the Thérèse to whom, in Paris, Courcelet had been so skilfully applying the brilliant varnish of his own indifferentism I can t help it, she thought, I change, that s all, and I change so fast that no varnish will stick The resolve was a true resolve—truer than her attempt to sneer at it

Dear Frédéric,

I left so hurriedly, there were so many things to do at the last moment, that I didn t properly say good bye to you You must have thought me a pig, particularly after your waiting up for me on Sunday night. I didn t properly thank you for that either The door was open, it was dark inside—as it used to be when I lived there—and when you came out of the little room on the right, the piano-room—it was a shock I didn t say much I couldn't I didn t mean to be unkind Please forgive me What had you been doing? Sitting there in the dark all that time?

The people from Paris haven't come yet I m all alone This is written on the beach I remember sitting here with my mother The paper has been lying face downwards, I suppose it has got damp and that's why the pencil writes so smudgily Do you often see Barbet? I suppose not. Do something for me—or don't if you'd rather not, I shall understand, anyhow I shan't know Tell him you have had a letter from me and thank him for Sunday Say I won t write from here as everyone will be fussing, but I will write from Paris

A little boy came to retrieve his ball which had rolled to Thérèse's feet She might have tossed it to him, but held it out so that he must come near to take it

' Play with me, ' he said

' Are you alone? '

No'

' Then why am I to play with you? '

He had not taken his eyes from her "I like you," he said

"Roussignac" Then she looked at the sea and tried to think of the sea, but she felt nothing, not even the pleasant melancholy she had hoped for, nothing except the bleakness of knowing that, though she and Barbet loved each other, their lives lay apart Even if he were to ask it, she must never allow herself to become his wife, trying to live at the Maison Hazard, nor must he, whose whole virtue was of tranquillity, be dragged at her heels through Paris, a lost man patted or despised as the husband of Therèse Despreux The simple escape from paradox would have been to say that, since it was so evidently impracticable that her life should be joined with his or his with hers, their love itself was a delusion, a sentimentality of opposites, and she asked herself seriously and honestly whether this was so Was she thinking as she thought now only because she was alone? When Cugnot and Madeleine came to-morrow, would her memory of Barbet be submerged in the news of Paris, in the saving rashness of their company, in her own passion to entertain? And if Philippe de Courcelet came with them, and to-morrow night—as was likely at the outset of a holiday—made his infrequent claim upon her, would she refuse for Barbet's sake? He amused her, she liked his leisurely and assured appreciation, his eyes would compel response in her, arousing desire the more certainly because, with him, it might be satisfied without commitment All this she faced and accepted, no longer as in the past, boasting to herself of her independence in morals, nor, with any reversion of sentiment, blaming herself She recognized that others would blame her and say that her preparedness to receive Courcelet was proof that what she felt for Barbet was not love but a desire to play another part this time a romantic one In face of this recognition and this self knowledge stood her innermost sense that she did indeed love him and that, though the outward conduct of her life might be unchanged, she would continue to love him Others might prove their love by fidelity of body, she also if he demanded and valued it, but he did not, and to herself the proof of her love for him and of its difference from what else she had known was precisely that she did not wish him to be jealous Jealousy was a cord by which men were bound and she would not bind him by jealousy, or by marriage, or by any sub-

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his instance, she was by the casual pass romantically dissatisfied—and dissatisfied not because he was offering too little but because he demanded of her less than she might, some day, have to give. She said, for her pride I shall have him when it suits me, and, though she would not admit it even to herself, she often listened with contempt to the beautiful voice with which he spoke to women as if he were stroking a cat He strokes and purrs at the same time, she said, but in public she praised his voice, and had long known, within her secret criticism, that of all the mauvais-sujets who attracted her there was none in whom she was more likely to discover some day a romantic and disastrous oblivion Some day! It was not her habit to trouble her head about the future, and their relationship had become one of light hearted postponements which gave an edge to their encounters At the station she was kissed by him with just enough excitement to make easy for her any response she chose, she made none, but put her arm in his as they walked out, with Cugnot and Madeleine, to the waiting carriage.

In the company of these three her spirits rose Cugnot, who was wearing yellow gloves, took off one of them to hold her hand and elaborately took it off again to pat her white horses—a politeness which, when they laughed at him for it, he defended with such seriousness and so good a pretence of having been wounded by their laughter that at first they laughed the more, then stopped, for one never knew at what point Cugnot made—it was Madeleine's phrase—his transition' and included himself in his own hoodwinking What were the tunes? Therese demanded. Templeraud hummed the first, she picked it up Cugnot beat time with a cane thrust into his empty glove. As yet there were no words.

I m not a poet but I will write a new Barbet song for you," Cugnot exclaimed "Only give me a title and I will write the words!

Therese looked from face to face.

You Therese, you always have a title up your sleeve!"

She was silent and stared out of the carriage towards the sea, but at that moment she became aware of Madeleine's discerning eye upon

There could not be a better reason She rose and played with him When he had had enough, he turned his back on her abruptly and ran full tilt towards his own people

"Oh, well!" She sat down again Bon, bon, Napoléon, va rentrer dans sa maison

" but I will *write from Paris or from* La Roche Guyon"

But perhaps she wouldn't She tore up her letter, returned to the villa, sent for Charlotte, Bridier and the coachman, reasserted discipline, put her house in order Next day, when Cugnot and Madeleine arrived, she found that they had brought Templéraud with them He had written music for some of her songs and wished to write more No shadow of embarrassment touched him in coming to Royan uninvited Last night Cugnot had said, "Why don't you come too? She'll be idle there, you can try your tunes on her," and he had come, sure of Thérèse's welcome, as he was of a welcome from all women, old or young His golden hair and full lips gave him a childlike appearance which a square jawbone and lean, sculptured cheeks saved from childishness, he had learned how to open his eyes, which were glistening and heavily lashed, in such a way as surrounded the iris with white and gave an effect of vagueness, of dreamy intensity, of "not being there,' and this effect was used, in its turn, to foster the idea of a charming irresponsibility so that it was a solecism to expect him to be punctual or pay his debts or remember at what girl's expense he supped last night In this useful affectation there was an element of truth, he was naturally head in air, good humoured and spendthrift, and was a *little distinguished* among Thérèse's male and female adorers at the Écurie by his ability sometimes to produce work that others would buy and by his quality of not being slavish, of expecting to be courted—his attitude of take-it or leave it even towards Thérèse herself She was never in his company without a desire *for self-abasement*, a wish to drown herself in his casualness To drown herself—not to dip into it It was this that surprised her Whenever he had suggested that she should be his mistress, she had passionately resisted the temptation of her senses, for the reason, astonishing in her later self analysis, that, in

Chapter 6

"MY DEAR THÉRÈSE," SAID CUGNOT, A WEEK later, "you are bored."

She was sitting to him for a portrait-drawing. "No," she answered, "why should I be? I haven't been sitting half an hour."

"I didn't mean bored by this sitting. I meant—"

"Nonsense," said Thérèse. "If one is alive, one is never bored!"

It was an article of faith, and she determinedly filled her days. She sat to Cugnot; she worked with Templéraud at her songs, refused him, desired him, laughed at him and at herself as though this were Paris and Roussignac did not exist. She drove, played cards and submitted herself to Courcelet's latest vanity—to improve her mind by teaching her history. Fortunately he had wit, knowledge and a roving mind which could be led easily into divagation, and Thérèse, who did not believe in missing chances, learned all she could of what happened to interest her in Periclean Athens and Florence of the sixteenth century These were Courcelet's subjects Being no fool, he introduced them opportunely, so that his teaching was less a lecture than a conversation, and Thérèse enjoyed being taught. "Men ought always to teach women," she told him to his delight. "If ever I had had a tutor, I should certainly have fallen in love with him"

But though she did not [illegible]
her mind [illegible]
of Templ[illegible]
concentrated enthusiasm, she was not carried away by them or, even for a moment, intoxicated by the idea of singing them in Paris; none of them seemed the best in the world because it was hers, because she had discovered it, she did not wake up with its tune in her

her and threw herself upon their gaiety She began to sing the tune again "What is it like? What is it like, Etienne? Not the tune, but the rhythm—it's a travesty of something?"

"I wondered how long it would take you to find that out Listen It's a variant of a very old song," said Templéraud in the caressing voice of an actor about to make a declaration of love He sang the tune again with a different stress Instantly they perceived the original and began to sing it Four lines they sang together, then, at Cugnot's signal, he and Madeleine and Templéraud abandoned to Thérèse the falling cadence

"Ma chandelle est morte,
Je n'ai plus de feu
Ouvre-moi ta porte
Pour l'amour de Dieu"

She sang again

"Ouvre-lui sa porte
Pour l'amour de Dieu"

She pulled down her veil and said "There's your title, Cugnot 'Ouvre-lui'"

"To Templéraud's tune?"

"What? No No, my God To the old tune"

"But, Thérese, however you change the words, you can't make an up-to-date music-hall song out of 'Au Clair de la Lune'"

"Can't I! Why not?"

Cugnot shrugged his shoulders "It is tender It is sad It is romantic It is dead against the fashion"

"That's why I chose it That is why I can make it succeed," said Thérèse " . This is the house Be nice to Charlotte She's in a temper"

But Charlotte was sulky no longer She enjoyed gay company and Templéraud kissed her soundly at the carriage door.

"Oh yes," said Thérèse, "he's my depravity And someone to dine with . Do you think it is possible to change one's whole way of life?"

"Certainly. It has been done."

"I mean—possible for me?"

"If you wanted to If you wanted to enough, it would in fact be already changed. The old way would have become valueless."

"You mean," said Thérèse, "that if I loved Barbet enough to change my life for him, I should drop Courcelet?"

"Oh no I'm not a fool I mean much more than that In the end, Courcelet would go with the rest In himself, he's not important"

"That's something," Thérèse answered "Only you would see that. If you had another man while loving Cugnot, would that be important?"

"Bless you," said Madeleine, "when I'm away from him, do you suppose I'm chaste for his sake? I'm chaste for my own sake. I don't make sacrifices for him If I did, I should think I was ceasing to love him. What others, outside, would call sacrifices are nothing of the kind They are a part of loving him. Listen," she said "This is the point They are a part of my own converted will So I believe So I feel For him—no, not even 'for' him—*in* him, I have become what I am"

A narrowing of the path gave Thérèse a reason to fall behind into single file. At last she said

"You aren't an actress"

"No"

"I am I am a professional diseuse"

"How much does that mean to you? As much as it did?"

"Yes."

"You say it doubtfully What is it, Thérèse? Are you contemplating giving up the stage for him?"

"Why should I?" Her voice quickened to an agitated defiance. "Why shouldn't I? Do you suppose I'm incapable of it? You make me speak as if I didn't love him. Why do you do that? You are happy It's easy for you You are like a married woman You have

blood but had, each morning, to lead her intelligence back to an analysis of it and its treatment When she wrote words to fit the tunes, or collaborated with Cugnot or Madeleine, or produced a group of verses for Templeraud to set to music, what she produced was, she believed, good, but she had little joy in producing it or even in contemplating the surprise, the applause with which it would be received Paris seemed far away, even Royan was sometimes far away, though she was in it She wrote a long serial letter to Barbet which she did not send I am a professional diseuse, she said to herself That's my job and always will be

One afternoon, while walking with Madeleine in the woods, she said these words aloud Madeleine looked at her and answered "You said that twice yesterday You have said it three times to-day," and because Therèse was afraid to speak at once of Barbet to Madeleine, she gave no reply but walked ahead in silence before looking over her shoulder to speak of Cugnot as a prelude to Barbet Madeleine *loved Cugnot, her eyes continually rested on him as if they* had neither rest nor pleasure elsewhere, as if only to see him were the beat of her heart, she touched him often as though he were magnet to her steel, and, when she did not, even her holding back was touch to one who saw it, and Therèse knew that though, upon many aspects of life, Madeleine's point of view was different from her own, she might speak to her of Barbet without fear to encounter the *chill* of the unloving She approached her own subject by way of Madeleine's "You are lucky," she said "You come out for this walk with me and you have him to go back to When we return and come nearer the house and walk up the steps, the house will be alive for you because, suddenly, you may hear his voice At dinner, the wine won't be just wine—it will be the taste of that instant in which you see him over the rim of the wineglass And when this time ends, there's Paris You'll go back with him In the train, near him In the studio, his things, your own"

"He may turn me out He does, you know, when he wants to live *alone* for a time"

"Does that matter? You come back"

"Is Courcelet nothing?"

it will seem real, what I have been saying now to you will seem a sneer at a kind of life that, in fact, I want and envy. Do you see that? I'm not dramatizing myself If I am, I can at any rate see myself in both parts, and I swear I can hiss myself off the stage if I begin to sentimentalize either" She turned down the corners of her mouth "And I know," she said, "which I shall play when it comes to the point."

"Which, Thérese?"

"Not the clinging woman . Oh," she added in reply to Madeleine's glance, "it won't be a noble renunciation for his sake! And I shan't even pretend to myself that it was I've outgrown *La Dame aux Camelias,* I promise you Anyhow it wasn't really for *his* sake that Marguerite Gautier let Armand go, and if it was, it would have been better if Dumas fils hadn't said so Besides, *Barbet isn't* Armand I couldn't cage him if I wanted to When he knocks, the door opens"

Madeleine cut the air with the switch she was carrying "According to the Gospels," she answered, "that applies to all of us."

"Except that we don't knock," said Thérèse. "I signed the Plence contract this morning"

only to trail round after Cugnot and live in his studio when he'll let you 'In him I have become what I am!'—God, what a phrase! You read metaphysics, you have a phrase for everything I have my life to live and it's my own life That doesn't say I'm incapable of—Don't you understand? I have nothing of Barbet *He* won't be in the house when we get back We have never been lovers You tell Cugnot that He thinks we have You tell him that I *should like* him to know"

She sat down on a bank, her fists clenched, her shoulders trembling, and when Madeleine turned back and came near, she burst out

"All right, I know it! I know it! If it comes to the point, I shall know whether I'm acting or not!" Then she stood up and began to walk again at Madeleine's side and said in an even and quiet voice "I'm sorry I was vehement I have a pretty steady mind, I can see myself In emergency, I always behave well I know inside me that our love can never have the ordinary, natural fulfilments Not only because he lives in the Charente and my work is in Paris It isn't a question of one of us being noble and giving up a career for love We should do no good if we did And it isn't even a question of our being different kinds of human being, none of the *clichés apply*, and, what's more, we aren't so different—anyhow our fires glow to the same bellows What I think is true is that most people ask too much of love They ask everything all the time They ask the things that don't belong to their particular kind of love And what Barbet and I can't ask is to be lastingly together—a rooted happiness, home, children We might have the rest if we could forgo that I see that now—clearly *enough—talking to you* And I've had experience enough to know the difference between—oh, what I've had a score of times and the enduring love, however separated, that there might be between him and me But always one wants more I say now that I don't I say most people want too much and I imagine that I'm wiser than they are But soon, perhaps to-night, I shall want more I shall say 'Why is it wrong, why should it be impossible that he and I *should be together*?' I *shall want* a home—or think I do I shall want children I shall imagine that kind of life with him,

cism, and when Courcelet said she was mad, that she must at all costs free herself of the Écurie, she answered that these people understood her and were not for ever asking her to become different from what she was. 'They appreciate me!' she declared "You hate them because you are rich. You don't love the theatre."

But she had, in truth, outgrown them The comfort she gained in their company was brief, the drug no longer worked, for they did not, in fact, fool her, she despised them while they petted her and the more for being blind to her contempt Her integrity could be overlaid but not killed, and often, returning alone in high excitement from the Écurie or from a party at which, made drunk by noise and adulation, she had betrayed herself in the wildest extravagances of mood, she would gaze blank-eyed, as though it were a dead house in Pompeii, at the flat of the Île St. Louis upon which she had spent so much care, and, because there was nothing she wished to do, kick off her shoes and sit upright on the arm of a chair or on the edge of her bed in that bitter chill of lucidity which a critical intelligence creates for itself amid the heat of wine.

One night in early October, as she let herself into the flat, she saw, on the floor of the entrance passage, a letter addressed in Barbet's hand She stooped, touched it, then, in sickness of heart, let it lie She passed through the sitting room, lighted a hand lamp, looked into her mirror and sat down on her bed, thinking that she did not wish to fall asleep fully dressed, but without initiative to move The dress she wore, that had been a delight and a challenge earlier in the evening filled her now with distaste. Remembering the praises she had heard of it and the hands that had touched it, she felt only that she had exposed herself in a cattle market

After half an hour, her head nodded, she wrenched it up and turned it That's something she said, looking through the communicating door into her sitting room Her rooms still pleased her when she remembered that they were hers she had made them, she possessed them she was no more a lodger in the Rue Lilas But I was happier in the Rue Lilas! Nevertheless she surveyed her possessions They pleased her, not now by those peculiarities, those special accents of taste which the camp followers delighted in and called

Chapter 7

WHEN SHE WAS RETURNED TO PARIS, THÉRESE set her face against the weakness that had come so near to capturing her at Roussignac That she and Barbet should be lastingly together was impracticable, that she should take to herself the credit of "renouncing" him was a sentimentality of Dumas fils She was a professional diseuse, in becoming one, she had unfitted herself to be anything else Of this she was by turns proud, ashamed and disbelieving, but it was a formula to which she clung during that autumn

Having, as she then supposed, reached a decision which excluded a major change in her way of life, Thérèse, after her manner, which was as drastic and imperious in thought as in action, variously supported it, seeking desperately by every means in her power to prove to herself that it was right Her support was sometimes a plain acceptance, which lent her a new quietness of demeanour, sometimes an irony at the expense of this very quietness which, when Cugnot praised it, she swore was a pose, suggested by the demure bonnets with which she had decided "to contradict the fashion", and sometimes by a stormy revulsion from everything that Barbet stood for in her mind Then she would resume her old, scalding habit of claiming for herself a virtue of unsentimental honesty, tell lie after lie for no other purpose than to proclaim herself a liar, and lash Courcelet into bitter frenzy by glorifying whatever was weak or vicious in her camp followers at the Écurie So rapid were her twists of motive that all Courcelet's subtlety did not enable him to perceive how it came about that, by agonized contraries, she praised these sycophants because she loved Barbet and wished to drown the impulse in herself to love him In these moods, she would hear no criticism of them, who by their flatteries eased her from self-criti-

"Your hangers-on They won't like it"

In a passion of resentful loyalty, she cancelled her plans, and sprang to defence of the party from which she had come Courcelet lay back in his chair and waited She would return to her "plan," and he had a scientific interest in the process In the end what he called her "delayed wisdom" always prevailed, perhaps because she was country bred or because she had been educated by the priest, Lancret, she always permitted her sense of ultimate advantage to prevail, in the nick of time, over her follies When her flood of words ceased and he judged that she was at last finally prepared to surrender, Courcelet began

"May I speak now?"

'Certainly, if you don't attack my friends."

'Dear Therèse, I shall not attack them. I shall tell you how, in my view, your own mind works. You must not interrupt me in order to make a display of loyalty, you must contradict me only if something that I say is untrue Is that agreed?'

'I shall not interrupt," Therese answered "I like you when you are playing your own game Besides, you will be talking about me. That is always interesting"

"Very well Courcelet continued "What at root you are proud of is your French country stock and your power to live by your own work by what you yourself do or make or invent. You are a self reliant animal. That distinguished you from a harlot even in your most promiscuous days It distinguishes you now from all parasites. Others are parasites *on* you And in your heart you despise them Myself, for example. I earn my place by amusing and educating you and by my supreme negative virtue of not bothering you, but you are much less attached *to* me than you are to Het Vaderland, an old stove that you found for yourself in a remote ironmonger's, which is yours—bought with money you yourself earned—and—"

All right," said Therèse, "but leave Het Vaderland alone He's special I don't want him talked about."

Courcelet refilled his glass and, as he did so, pressed her hand "I appreciate that Children are *often* very secretive about their dolls I won t invade your territory"

"Despreux," but rather by those plainnesses which were the choice of an earlier Thérèse—the window of her sitting room that gave upon the river and what she called the back-garden of Notre Dame, or the flowers she had cultivated outside her bedroom window, or her stove, which had pictures of Dutch country scenes on blue and white tiles and was called Het Vaderland (which she pronounced fantastically) and was, in effect, not an enclosed stove but an open grate with a tubular flue She rose from her bed and walked from one room to the other, comforting herself with these possessions, thinking of them by the names she had given them that they might not remain inanimate

While she knelt on her window seat, the door of her flat opened She did not move but allowed Courcelet the pleasure of surprising her by putting his arms about her waist

"I thought I should find you asleep"

"Then you'd have wakened me"

"Not necessarily"

"*What do you want? A warm bed for the night?*"

"Then get into it, my dear How can you work if you never sleep?"

She undressed obediently and gave him wine "I have no supper laid I wasn't expecting you to night I can get you some"

"Dearest, Thérèse, go to bed You are exhausted I have supped. I didn't expect myself"

"Thank God you came. I can't sleep I'm not in the least tired I want to talk" She added suddenly "I've made plans"

"Look," he said, holding out Barbet's letter "I found this in the passage"

She took it and laid it on a table, face downwards

"Don't you want to read it?"

"No"

He looked at it and hesitated "Well," he said, 'what plans?'

"You are right, Philippe, I need another string to my bow than the Écurie"

"And what about the rabble?'

"You mean?"

At that she was instantly alarmed

"Every woman, certainly every actress, has a legend," Courcelet said, "and she is happy and successful whose legend is, as it were, a projection—perhaps an enlargement, an exaggeration, but still a projection—of her own nature. If her legend becomes distorted, if others make it for her—advertising touts or managers or newspapers or stupid friends and it becomes a contradiction of her nature, then she is divided against herself, her energies are split between two lives, she becomes barren and lost. As an actress, a diseuse, you were entitled to make your own legend. What was it? An egoist. An individualist, self reliant, not clinging, contemptuous of patronage, a rebel against the big battalions. A girl who didn't bargain with her sex, who admitted her own pleasure and indulged it, but would cut out her own pleasure and anyone else's for the sake of her job. As an artist, unrelenting and unswerving, never complacent, never satisfied, as a woman generous, a giver-out, a good loser sans rancune—all that, Therèse, is what you designed, and it was possible—a legend you could hold together—because inside yourself you knew yourself to be—what?—a quietist amid the din?"

She flinched, recovered and said firmly "That is completely untrue. Why did you say it?"

"The man you love is a quietist?"

"Ah! So you said it to test me. You are cruel."

"To test your realism, Thérèse."

"Then I have survived the test. And if I'm not a quietist, which certainly I am not, what am I? You are so wise and so foolish that you interest me, Philippe."

"Then you shall tell me. If you aren't a quietist within the din, what is it that was to hold the legend together? What are you, Therese?"

"Natural," she answered, "within the legend."

"Ah, that will serve!" he cried, "That will serve! Now do you understand what I mean when I say that your rabble have distorted your legend? Put it no higher than professional advantage. I won't say that they have corrupted you, I don't think they have, in any case, I am not concerned with your morals. What they have done

"You haven't hit on the real reason that I despise you," Thérèse said, "—if 'despise' is the word"

"Haven't I?" But he scented diversion and refused the trail "I will return to that Meanwhile, what you despise more than me—"

"I don't despise!" she exclaimed "It is you who despise. I love people I love anyone who does a job of work well I—"

"There speaks Michael Angelo! Do you remember what he said on the subject? I told you at Royan 'I am of all men the most inclined to love people Whenever I see one who can do or say something better than the rest of the world, I can't help loving him, and then I give myself up to him and am his rather than my own.' Roughly that"

"Well?"

"Only that Michael Angelo—"

"I thought this conversation was to be about me?"

"Very well, as you please," Courcelet replied, straightening himself to the challenge "What, at root, you despise are the Hurtaux and Plences of this world, the men who don't produce but live by what others have produced, the tradesmen of the arts who are not content to be tradesmen but give themselves the airs of artists And even more, in your heart—for Plence and Hurtaux do at any rate shoulder a little commercial risk when they fail to pass it on to dupes and backers—even more you despise the wild excitable neurotics, without my detachment or your saving, country bred sanity, who cover their failures by pretending that they don t want to succeed and that anyone who works outside a coterie—at the Divertissements or at the Variétés for example instead of at the Écurie—has sold his precious self to the Philistines They would have formed a club to sneer at Michael Angelo when they heard that he was employed by the Vatican How can you enjoy the company of these people, and listen to their prattle as if it had value, and say you love them and let them hold you prisoner? Do you suppose that Michael Angelo would have given himself up to them and become theirs rather than his own?"

Thérèse tightened her lips but made no answer

"They have affected your legend, Thérèse"

begins to grow—a preserved and aging callowness, an effete immaturity They are tolerant of nothing but their own failures They treat everyone with whom they disagree as dishonest and fortify their ignorance with their sneers, like a frightened cur snarling to encourage himself They sneer indiscriminately and always in the same tone—at Musset, at Chopin, at governments, at rich men, powerful men, men who believe, soldiers who die—at everyone who accepts responsibility, above all the responsibility of greatness that they so easily evade. I am not speaking of the artists who go to the Écurie—men such as Cugnot—or of the people who drive out from my wicked world to gape at you and the artists, I am speaking of the gossips and hysterics of the place—Plence's slaves, your slaves for the time being—who have no place in life at all except in this coterie. It is their whole importance to feed Plence's importance or treat you as a goddess—for the time being But you are their slave, Therese, not they yours, for they have nothing to lose except their appetites and you have put your legend in their power You are isolated Your whole professional reputation rests on the Écurie If for a moment you offended the rabble, if they shrieked a little less hysterically on Tuesday than on Monday, Plence's brain would begin to wonder how soonest to be rid of you, and, as things stand, you would go elsewhere as a suppliant. You must go elsewhere at your time, not at his Your time is now Then you can return at your price, not his He must become not what he now thinks he is—your patron, almost your collaborator—but a middleman who, like other middlemen, competes for his goods in an open market"

No," said Therese, "I shall always ask less from Plence than from anyone else in Paris. I like him He understands me The Écurie is my place.'

So be it," said Courcelet. "I am not worrying about your salary"

"And I shall come back to the Écurie!"

"Then you will leave it?" he cried instantly

She had said more than she had intended, but not more than her resolve Should she give him the satisfaction of supposing that he had persuaded her?

is to give the impression that your whole legend is a pretence, that there is no naturalness within it, no stability or endurance, that you are one of themselves—living emotionally from hand to mouth, even your vitality a whipped up vitality, the effect of a drug"

At this Thérese moved in her chair, but he cried "Wait I will give you an instance. You can't deny it, you have acknowledged to me that your tongue is your enemy Why has it become so? Isn't it part of your nature—isn't it the life-blood of your whole legend, your image of yourself—that you don't hedge or pander to convention but speak with absolute directness?"

"But moods change," she answered "What is true now isn't necessarily true to morrow!"

"I didn't say 'speak with final truth,'" he answered, in the tone of an exacting but patient schoolmaster, 'I said 'with directness.' It was so, even when I first came to know you You were extravagant then, thank God, you always will be, you are not *replying for* a Government but for yourself, but then you were also naturally direct They applauded you, it was new to them, they were stung and exhilarated by it, then they wanted it, like a drug, *stronger and* stronger You gave it them Led on and led on by their flashy response, your tongue has acquired a habit of violence that has made a vice of your virtue Not that only You are naturally a realist You would have been one if Monsieur Zola had never been born You are so true a realist that, though you have long ceased to be a practising Catholic, I have never heard you make a sentimental denial of God, you do not suppose, as your rabble do, that, where you or they can see nothing, nothing exists That," Courcelet added in parenthesis, 'is why I love you in so far as I am capable of loving anyone, you are a more realistic sceptic than I am myself, you are not credulous, you believe very little, but you are not barren and indifferent as I am, there is nothing you are incapable of believing That is your nature—again the core of your legend, its link with what is great in the romantics—and yet you identify yourself with these little men who are 'realists by fashion and formula Their and fear of being called sentimental has confined them in the pose that we ought to cast off, if we have ever assumed it, when our beard

noisseur He was tasting it and it tasted sweetly of rejuvenation

"Very well, you shall have it," she said, coldly emphatic. "I will read it I will read it aloud to you, whatever it is."

He blinked and ran his tongue slowly across his upper lip, then, when she sat down, seated himself opposite her He took the kettle from the stove and let it dangle from his wrist, jigging it and sliding it

"You are like Victor"

He opened his mouth

"Victor Vincent," she said

She broke the envelope and began to read

DEAREST THERÈSE,

Though I expect you do not wish to be bothered with many letters, I have been promising myself to-day that I would write to you this evening As I told you once, you open doors for me, and it does me good to remember that Roussignac is not all the world. At present, as you can imagine, it is nearly all the world We have been sniffing our casks and tightening our hoops, and two days ago grape-picking began The rest you can imagine We—I mean our own vineyards—have done what would be considered moderately well in normal times, now, with the rest of the country so badly hit by the phylloxera, even that much prosperity is remarkable Anton can't understand why we are more or less immune

I had thought I might have been coming to Paris before the vintage began Now I expect I shall not see you until after the distillation I wish you could be here again some autumn It is the time of year I love best, except that people go out shooting The swallows and martins will soon be off for the South There was an army of them on the roof early this morning Thrushes and redwing are coming from the north and, as I said, the guns are out but the thrushes know about them and take cover under the vines.

Now I seem to have written very little of you, and you will be

"You have been knocking at an open door, Philippe. . No, not always, I know To-night you have, I told you I had made plans—"

"When does your contract end?" Courcelet interrupted She would go, he had gained his purpose and would clinch it, he was indifferent to the credit, as yet His intelligence preceded his vanity

"The third week of November"

"To-morrow, then, you will send out scouts"

"No," said Thérese "None of your diplomacy! I will go to the Divertissements and ask for work No, no, leave me alone I will do things in my own way It is part of my legend Now I am going to bed"

"Thank you," said Courcelet "I ask no other reward for my sermon You have a faultless intuition But there is one question I should like to ask," he added "What decided you 'to make plans'?"

"Your wisdom," she said

"What decided you to make plans?" he repeated

She jerked out the bow of his tie

"When other women are miserable," he said, "they go out and spend money When Thérèse is desperate, she sets out to make it Both motives lead to the grands boulevards"

"*Don't talk to me,*" *she answered* "*I am tired* Is the bottle empty? Give me some wine" She looked at the table

"Read that letter, Thérèse"

She did not move

"It has the Charente postmark Read it"

She turned it over and looked at the handwriting, the corners of her mouth falling

"Do you love him, Thérèse?"

"I don't know Yes Why?"

"Then you don't want me?"

"For God's sake don't talk," she said "Everything is killed by talk"

Was the man jealous—he, the indifferentist? He was no longer smiling His face was gravely sensual *as she had seen it sometimes* when he slept, when he dreamed Even of jealousy he was a con

'Why?'

"Why? Because I want to sleep"

'*For his sake?*'

Never quarrel Never quarrel with a hungry man Cover his vanity But she said

"For my own I want to sprawl."

'I am to go then?'

'Listen—" she began

'I will go," he said His recovery was admirable. "Will you please re-knot my tie? It was you who undid it."

She obeyed He took her hand and kissed it At the door, he turned

"Nevertheless, you go to the Divertissements?'

"All the more, I go to the Divertissements."

When the outer door had shut, she went to bed and turned upon her face and sprawled her limbs and slept.

saying why does he write only of the vines and the birds? what a provincial he is! But I can promise you I think often of the bonfire at St Cloud, and of how thirsty we were at La Roche Guyon The other day there was a Paris newspaper on Anton's table when I was in his room, and I saw a caricature of you What big eyes! I am always a bit alarmed if I see the name of anyone I love in a newspaper and if I saw a caricature of myself I should feel that the world had turned upside-down But I expect you are accustomed to it—or will be soon—and, when you are very famous, you will take no more notice of it than I do of my own face when I shave

As I must be up early, I shall now go to bed The prisoners often ask about you I tore out the caricature, meaning to show it to Fontan, but until this moment I have thought no more about it I have just found it in my pocket and am thoroughly ashamed of myself Good night, dear Thérèse

BARBET

When the letter was done, she waited, not looking into Courcelet's face His arm reached forward across her sight The kettle was set down

"The vintage," he said "The phylloxera Yes"

"Are you dumb?"

"What do you expect me to say?"

"Anything You are naturally eloquent"

"My dear Thérèse!"

Anger stirred in her again She saw ahead a scene in which, for Barbet's sake, she would stormily reject him, and the scene disgusted her "For Barbet's sake!" Dumas fils! She was a sane woman Courcelet's right was established He amused her He was her depravity He would serve She put Barbet's letter into its envelope, tossed it on to her desk and rose, intending to stretch out her hand to Courcelet At the same time he too rose and his feet shifted on the carpet When she looked at him, she found him breathless.

"You are enchanting," he said, "enchanting Like a girl"

She replied "I want to sleep alone"

was going to the Divertissements Plence, having something to lose, was more guarded His resentment would not strike unless she failed at the Divertissements, and he professed to be delighted by the news for her sake, she had taken, he said, a necessary professional step, he was glad to have been useful in launching a great artist who had now outgrown him, he would watch her future with affectionate sympathy, and hope that some day he would be able to buy her back for the Écurie She needed friendship so passionately that she flung her arms round his neck Of course she would come back! She would never be happy anywhere but at the Écurie It was *her* place —or was it his? She laughed and cried. "Oh, thank you, thank you for being so kind. I knew you would be! We do understand each other? We do understand each other, dear Plence, don't we? It isn t a *question* of money I ll come back for almost nothing if you want me I ll do anything for people if only they're *nice* to me."

'Entendu,' said Plence

She told Courcelet that he had been wrong about Plence "I don't care what people say I adore him. I have always found him honest."

Courcelet s eyebrows went up It was in his mind to say that, in less dubious men than Plence, honesty did not need to be proclaimed so vehemently and that, in any case, it wasn't reason enough for adoring a tradesman, but he denied himself the retort Suddenly he was sorry for Thérese She had promoted herself from Montmartre to the fashionable splendours of the Théâtre des Divertissements Lyriques and the triumph was empty if none would rejoice with her Anyone would do, even Plence—anyone who didn't argue or reprove or advise but would let her throw her arms round his neck It was for this reason that she needed the rabble at the Écurie, having no volition of their own, they would, like dolls, dance to any string she pulled When she was lonely, she had a habit of going to them, as a child to its toy cupboard

Poor Therèse," he said, delighted to find in himself that imaginative sympathy with a woman different from him in kind which he had often said was the hall mark of an artist "Poor Thérèse!" but as he said it and put out his hand to touch her affectionately, he

Chapter 8

NEXT MORNING PHILIPPE DE COURCELET SENT her flowers, this promptness being, she supposed, a sign of peace —a sign, at any rate, that after so unaccustomed a ruffling of emotion, he had resumed his habit of indifference and wished to announce it. He rarely quarrelled; if he did permit himself so warm a lapse, he would not add to it the emotional discomfort of a reconciliation, but forget silently. She was willing to be thus discreetly reconciled; it amused her to watch herself respond to his urbane good breeding as it would have amused her to prove, in his company, that one need not be an aristocrat to dance a minuet. But it disconcerted her when she found that, though he attended the Écurie, he was never alone; there were always friends at his table; he welcomed her but hedged himself in, and she did not know what was required of her. Supposing herself to be still nominally his mistress, she accepted his invitations to supper, but at these suppers she was one among his many guests; he treated her with charming intimacy but without confidence; when he drove her home, he avoided any question of breach by walking up to her flat and talking to her as he had a hundred times and leaving as he had a hundred times; it was impossible to ask: 'Have we quarrelled or have we not?' Nevertheless she asked it. 'Quarrelled? What on earth is there to quarrel about? My dearest Thérèse, surely we understand each other perfectly?' She did not understand. She felt that she was being outmanœuvred, that she was lonely and without friends.

The inner circle of the Écurie, which Courcelet called the rabble, was, as he had foretold, chilled against her, when, having secured her engagement for the winter, she allowed it to be known that she

"Look," he said to Thérese. "Undo it."

She undid the packet he had placed in her hands It contained a small enamelled box on one side of which was the letter T in diamonds and the other letter F

"Is it a patch box? Have you ever seen my patch box with the lilies of the valley? It was given to me in the Rue Lilas"

"It's a snuff box," said Courcelet.

"No, not the Rue Lilas!" exclaimed Therèse "It was given to me at Mantes"

"It belonged to Fouche," said Courcelet "That is his F. Inside, you will find an inscription. There's no doubt of it The T, I'm afraid, was added by the second owner, an Austrian, who bought it in '21, after Fouche's death When I first saw it, I hoped the T might have been Talleyrand's—but no such luck We have the whole pedigree"

"It's lovely," she said "But why Fouche?"

"Because—" He stared Then, guarding himself with a smile from being fooled, quoted her own quotation

"But why Fouche?"

"He said it"

"He didn't! I did!"

Courcelet laughed aloud as he laughed seldom This, he thought, is admirable fooling, then wondered—was it possible? Hadn't she known?

"Anyhow," she said, turning the box over, "T stands for Therèse"

She remembered that, on this occasion, he would wish to be spontaneously kissed, and turned her head But not in the cab—it rocked on the cobbles, at the Palais Royal.

In Courcelet's rooms, she again thanked him for Fouché's snuff-box and kissed him, but his arms did not move upon her or her body slacken within them She looked at him kindly, for she was fond of him, and thought such as it was, it is over

"Well?" she said

Not pretending to misunderstand her, he smiled an old smile, considerate and patient "After all, if one doesn't make a tragedy of it, there are still good wine and good talk"

asked himself—just as the rabble asked themselves!—whether he was not being sentimental, and a look of patronage came into his face which he felt upon it and could not banish in time. Fear succeeded it. He thought she would strike him.

"You are pitying me," she said.

He answered, awkwardly and stupidly: "Is that a crime?"

"It is worse than a crime. It is a blunder."

Now what is one to do with a girl who, when you expect her to slap your face, whips out a saying of Fouché? Courcelet glowed with admiration. His guard was down. He seized her hand with the impetuousness of a lover and kissed it in delight. She responded instantly. This at any rate was enthusiasm. It puzzled her, she didn't understand it, but it moved her heart. For its sake, she would forgive anything. If he would be glad, no matter why, she would be glad with him.

"You are funny!" she said.

"I will give you a present to celebrate that," he exclaimed. "I have had my eye on it a long time. The very thing! I know where we'll go! I know the place!"

Without waiting for his own carriage, he put her into a cab and gave the driver precise instructions. When they reached their destination, a street to the south of the river behind the Quai Voltaire, he commanded her to wait, climbed out and vanished through a doorway. She thought: in Roussignac the distillation has begun, and put the thought from her. "What street are we in?" she asked the cabman. He told her. A moment later she could not remember the name and dared not ask for it. Why had she asked at all? I like Philippe, she thought, he's dry, he plays by the rules, but when she leaned out of the cab she found herself looking into the face of a girl who was happy. The girl didn't see her. She was looking beyond the tail of the cab into the street. A man who had crossed the street, came round the wheel and joined her. They walked away, their smiles alight with the joy of being together, he with the heavy basket she had been carrying. Courcelet so nearly collided with them that he took off his hat and apologized.

"The Palais Royal," he said to the cabman.

rate—then separate hopes, now separate despairs. It is the fate of most women who are well brought up, but, unlike *me*, they do not acknowledge this separateness, they hanker for a romantic unity which their own experience—the fact that their minds began to dream of raptures before their bodies had taught them how to select and fulfil their dreams—has made, for them, impossible. I am not the materialist you suppose, Therese, nor the dry sceptic I know that men and women can love But to love is an art like another, an amateur does not produce an enduring masterpiece"

"Thank you," said Therese "Then I am fortunate."

'So is Barbet Hazard'

She drew breath at the name "When I spoke of drowning myself, I wasn't thinking of him That wouldn't be drowning"

He had been aware of this, and he said "Of whom, then?"

She threw up her arms and stretched and smiled 'No one. I don't know Another substitute, perhaps. This time without moderation'

Is that a reason that you shouldn't sometimes dine with me here or at Larue?

'None unless you consider it a reason Are you proof against jealousy?

No,' said Courcelet, I should be sorry if I were But I *do not* allow jealousy to turn my wine to vinegar"

From that time onward she saw little of him He did not surrender his key to her flat but seldom used it, his attendance on her was chiefly in public, and she understood that what he required of her was that she should not spectacularly cease to be his mistress He would not be driven by jealousy or desire to force an issue with her he preferred suspense to an end, being capable of putting sections of life into brackets, his vanity enabled him to hope, perhaps to believe, that she would not be unfaithful to him, he would besiege her with his detachment and patience, he would starve her of his company, which she enjoyed In the end, if he did not formally abandon them he might recover his privileges.

Indeed, she missed him, and missed even more that steely casual

"*As bad as that?*"

"As intelligent as that."

"Too intelligent," she answered. "I am tired of being moderate. [illegible]

you needn't look so alarmed—I don't mean in the Seine."

"Well, certainly," he said, "*I am not the appropriate person in whom to drown yourself.*"

She looked at him and answered slowly: "When you and I are together, each of us is always alone."

"Isn't that the charm and the convenience—"

"Yes," she interrupted. "It was. I'm grateful. You have been—"

"Thérèse, you are committing a cardinal error. You are about to say good-bye."

"Wouldn't that be *honest*?"

"Yes, yes," he said with good-humoured impatience. "If I were a young man wishing to drown himself in you, then it would save us both from the humiliation of bobbing heroically in the shallows. As it is—"

But he would not say "go and drown yourself in whom you please." A twinge of jealousy checked the words. He wished to retain, if not absolute possession, a suzerainty over her, and a reversion. Postpone, postpone. Anything, when one is growing old, is better than finality.

"As it is," he went on, "I understand you better, perhaps, than you wish to understand yourself. At the customary time, when you were green, you missed your experience of love. I and others have been substitutes. You produced a philosophy to explain us—a philosophy of casualness and indifference tenable by me because, in me, it is founded on disillusionment, but not by you—you are not disillusioned because until now you have never loved. Now, already sensually mature, you have fallen in love with a wine-grower. The heavens have opened to you when you are equipped to appreciate them. I envy you the experience. I fell deeply in love before I was a man. The heavens opened before I had ever watched a lady brush her hair. As a result, the two things have been for me always sepa-

a dam were broken and her whole being were released and poured out. On her knees before him, she lifted a face so transfigured that he had not the courage of it and put his hand over her head and pressed it against him that her face might be hidden. He supposed, nevertheless, that what she felt was the lust to which he was accustomed and when she spoke he did not understand that she was expressing more than this She said "Why didn't you tell me that it was you I loved? It is you I love you," and she continued in this way until he silenced her He said that he loved her, the word "love came to him out of the past as if it were the "good morning, sir' of a tradesman when a customer enters his shop, and it was not until he had lain with her that he began to understand that she was using the word as something else than common form He looked down at her face, at once startled and appeased, he stroked her forehead and was appalled by the expression of rapturous peace in the eyes that opened and regarded him Wishing to return to the piano, he moved his left foot towards the edge of the bed, but covered his retreat by smiling at her with that soft upward curling of the mouth-corners which gave to his lips an expression of great tenderness Her eyes filled with tears, she put her arms round him with the passionate confidence of a terrified child whose safety was in him

A harder man than Templéraud could not long have deluded her because, in fact, he did not love her, her eye, which was still shrewd must have seen through him, but Templeraud was malleable by devotion, and when he had ceased to be astonished, he began to live the part for which her passion cast him, to feel and breathe it. As Christmas passed and the new year came, he learned even to say to himself when he woke in the morning I love her, and to believe that this was true.

To this seeming romance, circumstances contributed—first of all that his fame sprang up with her new fame at the Divertissements. By Courcelet's contrivance—because to be her patron was his dearest vanity and because he felt that Templeraud was not at the level of his jealousy—Therese was launched upon certain draw-

ness in herself which had formerly made him sufficient to her. Until the evening on which she had driven with Barbet to supper at the Maison Hazard she had been able to sustain herself by reserved and bracketed pleasures; and now she could not. She was unarmoured and lonely. The proudest boast of her egoism—that she was clear-minded and conscienceless, that she knew precisely what she wanted—was no longer valid; if it had been, she would not have left Roussignac instantly or have forbidden herself to write to Barbet, but have stayed and used her power upon him. This weakness alarmed her; she was changing and drifting. She wished still to desire Courcelet's company, remembering what pleasure it had given her, but, in his company, found that she had lost her taste for it; her attention wandered; she smelt the hot, leathery smell of the tilbury hood or saw the swallows on the reeds or counted seven stars in the western courtyard or, striving to turn away from vain imagining of Barbet, was driven back to the moment in which, as she watched his face while his mother and the priest continued their game of cards, she had thought: this happiness is with me now, he is near me now, and had dreaded the future time when the present would have become a memory.

Sometimes during that November, when she was alone, or with Courcelet at a restaurant, or working with Templéraud at the new songs they were preparing for the Divertissements, her sense of isolation, of being rootless and out-of-touch, became so urgent that her hand, for an instant, moved in the air as though she were groping for physical contact. Courcelet watched this gesture with amiable curiosity. "You have a new mannerism," he said, "and a very becoming one. You have a beautiful left hand." Templéraud also observed it. What it meant he did not know except that she was unhappy and therefore vulnerable. One evening in his own rooms in the Rue du Paon, as he twisted on the piano-stool to speak to her, he found that her back was towards him and her hand extended, the fingers closing on the air, and he put his own hand in hers, so that, as her fingers closed, her body was shaken by the surprise and joy of a human contact. He drew her down instantly and she came to him not only without resistance but with extreme impulse, as though

Thérèse would not eat before her performance When it was over she went out to supper, seldom with Templéraud alone but always with him among her escort unless Courcelet was her host, for Courcelet, as he himself would say with a reserved and patient smile, still had the privilege of private audience. "But why?" said Templéraud "Why that old man?" "Because I *like* him," Thérèse answered "Because he is a barometer!" She knew that she had lost her head, she liked to be told so, but only from Courcelet could she endure the telling He was her life-line to sanity; as long as she held it, she could go out of her depth as far as she pleased, she could, so to speak, drown with assurance of recovery.

"But life-lines snap," said he.

If she was not invited to a private house, she supped often at an L-shaped table set in a corner of the large room at Maubant's What pleased her there was that, instead of ordinary wine-glasses, there were red goblets on spiral stems, and that the table-cloths had long silk fringes that she could twine over her wrist, and that the gas-lights were shaded by enormous tulips of red silk It gave her a sense of establishment to go continually to the same place—to feel, when a good evening came to an end, that it was one of a series, part of a routine, and that to-morrow, at the same hour, she would come to the same table There was variety enough in the company, her table became a club, whoever took her there must expect others to join them, four became a dozen, a dozen fifteen, fifteen overflowed on to little tables drawn into the L Drinking coffee herself, she would talk of cognac, of the vines, of Roussignac and the Charente, of the music that Templeraud had composed for her at Royan "We," she would say always of him and herself—a strange form of egoism, Courcelet observed, that converts itself into the plural.

It was the excitement of her company that all her opinions came from her own mint They came with an unexpectedness that seemed at first ext

morals,

from he

promising spirit, had the consistency, not indeed of any system or external loyalty, but of her generosity, her happiness in loving and praising, her gratitude for all boldness. Ferry

ing rooms where, at that time, journalism, politics, finance and that florid aristocracy of the Third Republic which Plence had called le deluge, used artists and singers as a kind of rococo decoration Wherever Thérèse went, Templéraud, with his mop of golden hair his lifted eyebrows, his slow, vague, enchanted smile, gave her his arm Every compliment paid her, she shared with him, looking into his face, laying her hand on his when others appreciated him flaring to indignation if any omitted him from her honours Her honours were great The 'uniform" in which Cugnot had been compelled to paint her on the day of her first meeting with Courcelet—the black dress, the crimson mittens and shoes—became a mark for caricaturists as early as January '85, her dramatic monologues, the Petits Chevaux, drew not the fashionable only but the painters and writers of Paris to the Divertissements at the hour of her appearance there, and it was by members of her audience that she was given new subjects for brief Barbet songs and sketches which, topical as a newspaper, would often disappear from her programme after a single night It was a time of social and political disquiet The ministry of Jules Ferry was felt to be near its fall the senatorial elections at the end of January gave it an appearance of renewed strength, but Courcelet was not deceived by them, It s not the Ministry only, it s the Republic that is in difficulties' he said and Ferry is worn out Paris was insecure Royalism and Bonapartism were renewing their hopes, the Extreme Left, the surviving Communards were re sharpening their weapons, on all these things and on the trifling incidents of each day the fictitious character to whom the name of Barbet had been given was called upon to make his comment Even in these topical fragments Thérèse jealously preserved his individuality, the plainness, the directness, the absence of spite that was the essence of his own songs and because the tone of Paris was bitter and uneasy he became a unique legend precisely because his political comment was not Her Barbet songs had for a Paris surfeited with shrewdness and intrigue the delight of something fresh, incongruous, holding the challenge of truth in its innocence, and they became a fantastic oracle, to be quoted with the affectionate laughter that abides in nursery tales and endorses the truth in them

Why are you intolerant of old men? Why must I pretend to despise Hugo because I can read Mallarmé?'

She had bought the Meissonier because Templéraud had admired it as they walked together through the auction rooms in the Rue Drouot, and she gave it him in a silver case, asking that he would carry it with him. Whenever she saw it in his possession she was happy; it seemed to her a miracle that she should have become rich enough to buy Meissonier; and because Templéraud was by nature vague, elusive, unseizable, she began, by a rule of contraries, to search her life for signs that her relationship with him was permanent. She gave him little gifts of the kind that a wife gives to a husband, not a mistress to her lover; she changed the habit of her life because his digestion required a morning walk on the quays; she began to wonder whether, in encouraging his partnership with her and persuading him to write new songs, she was standing between him and his development as a composer. Her admiration had the same impact as her passion; Templéraud was converted to ambition as he had been to love, and to the same extent—that is to say, he began to play the part of a young composer; he found reason to despise the masters of the generation that had preceded his own, and believed in his heart that, when his absent-mindedness made him forget his appointments with Thérèse, he had been occupied in the design of a symphony. Nevertheless there was in her a saving energy; she believed in his symphony when he was absent from her; when he was present, she made sure that he produced what tunes she needed at the *Divertissements*.

Sometimes she would break away from Templéraud, from Courcelet, from her company at Maubant's, and visit Cugnot and Madeleine in their studio, because it was unchanged and because nothing in their manner bowed down to her new fame. To them it was an unimportant toy. They did not despise it or blame her for enjoying it, but assumed that when she came to them she had put it away in a cupboard and wished to think and speak of other things. Once she took Templéraud with her, wishing him to share with her the pleasure, the sense of security, she had in Madeleine and Cugnot's relationship, but the evening was a failure; Templéraud was more

she admired, though her sentiment was in the First Empire, she admired him because he stood to his guns and, according to his lights, for France, but his friends were baulked in their attempt to make her his adherent in her songs "Why, if you admire him?" "Because" she said, "I don't want to," and would give no reason less imperious Nevertheless when it amused her and she found a good rhyme, she would sometimes give the President of the Council a pat on the back from the stage of the Divertissements

Never had money flowed for her as it flowed now—for her, not to her Her salary was high and would increase, it dazzled her country memories, yet was not wealth But outside her flat in the Ile St Louis she spent little and lived at the world's expense as though money were endless investing her savings meanwhile as Courcelet directed her, selling at his command and begging him for permission, which for a long time he refused, to buy a carriage and pair of her own She slipped his guard to buy pictures—her own portrait from Cugnot, a red chalk from Madeleine, pen drawings of Caran d'Ache paintings and drawings by young men of the open air and to everyone's astonishment a tiny sketch of Meissonier's The naturalists had supposed her to be an adherent of theirs They bombarded her with their indignation when one evening at Maubant's she brought Meissonier out of her card case Plence was there He dragged his finger tips across his eyes and began to lecture her on the demerits of Meissonier with the moral fervour of a Communard on the subject of Thiers At last he threw up his hands and cried "Twelve hundred francs for a visiting card Twelve hundred francs for the Old Guard!" And three times in sepulchral despair "Why Meissonier? Meissonier? Meissonier?"

"Because," said Thérèse to prick his rhetoric "he was born in the year of Waterloo" Then, when Plence was being laughed at, she added "And because he can draw! And because he pleases me! Is that enough?"

"You will say next that Hugo is your poet He is near enough to the grave"

"Thank you" said Thérèse "you have given me an idea I will recite Hugo to-morrow night It will astonish the Divertissements

with the present It reappeared for an instant as she opened her flat, for there was a letter on the carpet and she remembered how Annette s envelope containing forty one francs had been slid under her door while she was talking to Barbet. The whole scene returned, the new corkscrew, the tuft of Barbet s hair, the weight of the grapes on her palm and the recollection was so vivid, so deep a stab, that she might have taken relief in speaking of it to Templéraud, but as she stooped for the letter, he had walked beyond her into the sitting room his back was towards her, and, after a glance in his direction, she closed her lips. The letter was addressed in Barbet's writing She held it between her hands, then, in the sitting room, put it away in the drawer of a walnut desk Templéraud swung on his heel

What did you put in there, Thérèse?"

'A letter

'But you didn t read it?

'No

"Or open it?'

"No

"You have put other letters in that drawer?'

"Yes. Unread Unopened'

He smiled indulgently 'The little wine grower? Why do you keep his letters if you don t open them?'

She was silent

'Some day you know, you will have to burn them,' he said

'Perhaps. She made a movement towards him For his sake she would have burned them. She lowered her head and pressed the backs of her hands against her dress, longing that this abject obedience this surrender of her innermost fortress, should be de manded of her by him. But Templeraud s mind had drifted from the subject he took her into his arms and kissed her For an instant, and for the first time, response was absent in her, she thought I have not burned them he is still alive, he is asleep now in his bed, then she felt Templeraud s lips upon her eyelids, desire grew upon her like a fungus on the brain Cugnot and Madeleine and Annette were forgotten the pile of letters in the drawer behind her fell from

than ever elusive; he seemed to "go away" from her. "Why did you 'go away' from me to-night?" she had asked as they drove home. "Don't you like Cugnot and Madeleine?" He had smiled and left her answerless "Did I 'go away'? My darling, you imagined it. At any rate, I didn't know that I had" She made excuses for him Perhaps he had been thinking about his symphony, perhaps he had been shy because Cugnot and Madeleine had not been alone, Annette had been there, Plence and two young dancers had come in during the evening.

"What did you think of Annette?"

"Which was she?"

"Annette? The dark girl who was there all the time Not one of those who came in with Plence You were talking to her when they came You were charming to her, I thought you must have known who she is She's a part of my history, Etienne I have told you about her Don t you remember? She was the girl who shared my room in the Rue Lilas"

"And cheated you?"

"Oh no, she didn t mean to cheat, she paid back in the end"

"And now you have been helping her?"

"A little," Thérèse admitted And I wanted her to meet Plence to-night, nowadays Plence will do a great deal that I ask, he wants me back at the Ecurie, you see"

As they climbed the stairs to her flat, Thérèse continued to chatter of Annette describing their adventures together when they were out of work and poor 'Often we were hungry, and she's poor still But it's not charity, Etienne I like bad hats I lost touch with her for a time, but I was glad, really glad, when she turned up again She'll never be first rate—on the stage, I mean, she doesn't care enough, but she has talent, I expect she ll marry and be happy Be nice to her, Etienne"

Thérèse did not tell him that it was through Annette that Barbet had found her in the Rue Lilas She herself had not forgotten it, but had put it a little way from her, out of the focus of memory, among the shadows which half-conceal those moments of the past that by their happiness, or by their misery, are unbearably contrasted

efficient, all right When it's a question of new work, he's efficient But he isn't patient about going back over old work—repairs and maintenance In a partnership like ours there must be repairs and maintenance."

The renewal of her friendship with Annette was a sauce with a sharp flavour that pleased her She could persuade herself that after their experience of poverty, they stood together in the world, and that Annette, because superficially a wastrel, had a kinship with her that only they could recognize. *How happy I am!* she told herself continually She was satisfied in body, *the foundations of life had become firm under her feet because she was loyal, and content to be loyal, to one man.* Not to have to lie to anyone was a peaceful experience which she enjoyed, and it surprised her that sometimes when Templéraud asked where she had been or what she had said, the answer that sprang to her lips was not the innocent truth but a lie without cause or purpose. She would speak it and he believe her, two or three days later, when he had forgotten the incident, she would recall it and tell him that she had lied, delighted to observe that he was greatly flattered by these confessions, though they confused his brain and he did not know whether they were true or false She explained this to Courcelet "Why do I lie? Is it just a habit?" Before he could reply, she continued "That is what is so extraordinary! Men are so easy to deceive that it seems a waste of time to be true *to them* They don't really appreciate it They don't know the *difference* If you make a habit of confessing to lies that were obviously pointless, a man becomes so entangled that he ceases to have the least idea *whether* you are lying or not It's too easy"

"Dear Thérèse," Courcelet answered, narrowing his eyes in affectionate derision, "why are you talking like a milliner's assistant in a cheap play? It's not your *custom.* It is true that you can so confuse a man that he doesn't know whether you are lying, but that, if I may say so with discretion, is proof of your stupidity and shallowness, not of his. To kick over a chess-table does *not* prove that you can play chess. I have always supposed it to be one of the profoundest honours that one human being can pay another—to care and know

her mind, the delight of subjection to Templeraud rose about her, overwhelming her in a darkness against the world

"Do you see much of her?" he said

"Who?"

"That girl"

She opened her eyes, struggling back to recognition and understanding "What girl? Darling, what girl?"

"Annette"

"Oh, Annette! I asked her to supper at Maubant's Thursday, I think"

He released her and warmed his hands at the stove

"Come on Thursday," she said "You might be able to help her She has a better voice than mine A better singing voice, I mean'

He stretched himself "Sleepy? It s a cold night I think I ll bring my things and undress by the fire"

She was always on her guard against allowing herself to cling to Templéraud Their partnership must be free, they must not be answerable to each other, and sometimes, that he might do likewise, she would refuse to tell him where she would be at a given time. Afterwards, without seeming to inform him she would let him know where she had been, but so drifting were his moods that she was never sure that he remembered the truancy she was trying to explain

He preferred always that their conversation should slide away from facts and decisions, and she found it hard to discover even what his judgment was on her interpretation of his music As professional partners, they ought, she said to Annette to have gone regularly "into committee Then he could tell me,' she added, 'line by line what he really thinks"

"Well," said Annette, 'that s all very well for you and me, but I don't think Etienne is that kind of artist He isn't just efficient, he's intuitive"

"And where did you pick up that jargon?' Thérèse demanded "It has been the excuse of everyone who has been too lazy to do his job since the beginning of time No Make no mistake Etienne is

consisted in his noticing with precision any change she had made in her performance If he was opposed to it, she countered his opposition fiercely, saying that criticism of detail made her self conscious and that several of her admirers had particularly applauded the passage he criticized, but more often he praised the change she had made, and she felt that he was not only a vague and beautiful lover but a constructive partner, greatly more intelligent than a jealous world supposed him to be Then she would throw her arms round his neck and they would talk of the house they would have in Burgundy They would go there between her engagements in Paris and would live in the utmost simplicity, for, if you were happy, what need was there to be extravagant? He would suggest details of this establishment—his room must be on the ground floor with steps into the garden so that, when he was composing, he could take the air without walking through the house, or there must be a canopy to her bed with stars on it—and she would feel that the house was real and that they would grow old in it together and were capable of making each other lastingly and quietly happy "You know, Etienne," she said, "I suppose people would have thought it fantastic that you and I should live peacefully together But it isn't. Oh, my darling, I love you! I want no one else."

But she could not help being a little surprised as well as gratified that he, the least observant of men, should have become capable of noticing every change of timing or attack every detailed twist of her performance in which she happened, at the moment, to be particularly interested She had decided that an improvement might be made in the way she took a curtain call She would be moving towards the audience, so that the curtain should seem to fall between her admirers and their expectation and provoke them to more applause The forward movement, she explained to Annette, would have to be judged with the utmost precision, if it were too slight, it would seem hesitant and miss its effect, if it were advanced too far down stage, the curtain would seem to have fallen clumsily in her face She had shown Annette what she intended, the inclination of her body and the angle at which she would place her forward foot "Like a mouse," Annette had said stupidly

At the Divertissements she used this method with success, win-

when he is telling the truth If you destroy the knowledge, in the end you destroy the care"

Thérèse began to laugh "All right. All right," she said. "Don't be angry with me It's not true"

"What is not true?"

"That I lie to Templéraud Why should I? I love him I have nothing to lie about"

"No," said Courcelet, "and yet you do lie"

"Sometimes, perhaps, for the fun of it"

Courcelet walked away from her and looked out through his window over the arcades of the Palais Royal

"Rain," he said with a sigh, "I am tired of it I am growing old. I want the sun to shine" Then he turned to her and said in a flat voice without emotion "Isn't it the whole problem of existence to overcome the difficulty of communication between one human being and another? Without lucidity nothing is workable It is the virtue without which women are dull and art meaningless And yet, loving this man as you say, you deliberately confuse your relationship with him by lying 'for the fun of it'! That seems to me an odd habit in an actress who doesn't mumble on the stage As I am your audience and not at present your lover, could you give me a true answer to one question?"

"Yes"

"Would you lie to your vine grower?"

She did not answer

"When does he appear in Paris again?"

"I don't know"

"Doesn't he write to you?"

"Yes, he writes"

"Well?"

She shook her head Even to Courcelet, she would not confess to her hoard of unopened letters

How happy I am! she told herself, for gradually Templeraud was persuaded into a partnership as she understood it, and would often "go into committee on repairs and maintenance" What had produced this docility in him she did not know or stay to ask It

consisted in his noticing with precision any change she had made in her performance. If he was opposed to it, she countered his opposition fiercely, saying that criticism of detail made her self-conscious and that several of her admirers had particularly applauded the passage he criticized; but more often he praised the change she had made, and she felt that he was not only a vague and beautiful lover but a constructive partner, greatly more intelligent than a jealous world supposed him to be. Then she would throw her arms round his neck and they would talk of the house they would have in Burgundy. They would go there between her engagements in Paris and would live in the utmost simplicity, for, if you were happy, what need was there to be extravagant? He would suggest details of this establishment—his room must be on the ground floor with steps into the garden so that, when he was composing, he could take the air without walking through the house; or there must be a canopy to her bed with stars on it—and she would feel that the house was real and that they would grow old in it together and were capable of making each other lastingly and quietly happy. "You know, Etienne," she said, "I suppose people would have thought it fantastic that you and I should live peacefully together. But it isn't. Oh, my darling, I love you! I want no one else."

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At the Divertissements, she used this method with success, win-

ning for herself, even on Monday night, two more curtains than were customary on Monday nights When next Templéraud "went into committee" with her, he asked if he was not right in thinking that she had changed her method of taking a curtain-call, and praised her skill

"Of course," he said with an air of wisdom that she found enchanting, "it may be dangerous, Thérèse You can't afford to be a fraction of a second wrong If you didn't move far enough, the thing would miss its effect If you are even a few inches too far down-stage—"

She smiled with delight "You are a darling, Etienne, to care so much You have thought it out as if it were your own performance, not mine"

"Naturally But you know, Thérèse, there's one thing—"

"Now," she cried, "don t spoil it all What?"

"No, I'm not criticizing One thing that I particularly admired. The angle of your foot—looking out from under your dress like a mouse"

Words leapt to her mind It was Annette who told you that! she would have said but was silent Everything you have said was told you by her! but the words had no sound except in her brain She looked at his smiling mouth, the wide eyes expectant of her customary praise for the acuteness of his observation, the golden hair that grew away from his forehead like the flick of a pennon in the wind, and she thought that it was, after all, natural that he should have noticed how important it was to time that curtain-call accurately The likening of the tip of a woman's shoe to a mouse looking out from under her petticoat was common stock, there was no reason to assume that it had been borrowed from Annette She decided to say to Etienne, quietly and without emphasis, that Annette also had happened to speak of a mouse, and see what reply he made But she said nothing and turned her mind away

Afterwards her memory called up from the past the many conversations in which she had analysed her work to Annette and Templéraud's repetitions of them How was it possible that, until the word "mouse" had forced the connexion upon her, she had not

suspected it? The connexion was evident, but she would not allow herself to blame Etienne Soon, she thought, he and I will laugh together over it, and was glad that she had not embarrassed him by at once blurting out her discovery Time enough, time enough! There was no harm in his foolish trick—nothing to blame him for, nothing to fear Nothing to fear, she repeated Was it not charming and childish in him to want so much to please her that he cheated for her sake, like a boy using a crib at school? She felt no resentment against him or against Annette said nothing on the subject to either of them and relapsed into the joy of having two friends who conspired to flatter her work and evidently discussed it when absent from her Nevertheless, she decided to give Annette no more material for conspiracy The decision stood for a week After that Annette's purring adoration of her proved irresistible, she poured out her plans, her amendments, her triumphs and misgivings It amused her to count the days until Etienne dutifully repeated them She gave him a new nickname.

"My little parrot!"

"But why parrot?" he asked, examining himself in her long mirror He had been trying on for a second time the renaissance costume he was to wear when he and she went together to a ball at Monsieur Gaillard's house—a fantastic house, 'un château de Blois nouveau modèle' wrote a polite journalist celebrating the approaching festivity, but Therese was pleased by her invitation to it and by having secured one for Templerand How handsome he looked! She turned him about and gave a twist to his cloak as though she were dressing a child for a party, and kissed him suddenly with tears in her eyes. Why? Because he was hers, because, whatever happened between them, she would never again be able to look into her long mirror without remembering that it had held his reflection in this costume which her hands were now touching and from which there came to her nostrils the thick, exciting smell of a costumier's wardrobe

"But this," he said taking the head dress in his hands. "Is it right? I mean, does it belong to the rest?"

She had to confess that it did not Courcelet had suggested their

wearing renaissance costume and had approved her choice for Etienne, but the head-dress, a velvet cap with a fall of velvet at the side, she had chosen afterwards. "Give it to me," she said. "I will make sure. I will show it to Philippe."

An appointment with Courcelet was made. She would have lunch with him on Thursday, bringing the cap with her, and she looked forward to the discussion of renaissance dress that the cap would provoke, to being shown the new Tissot Courcelet had bought, and to leading him into one of those shrewd commentaries on public affairs which gave fresh material for her performances. It was his pride to give her, whenever they met, at least one idea on which to build a topical verse; he delighted in an opportunity to display his knowledge of the by-ways of history; and when she invited herself to lunch with him on the pretext of Templéraud's head-dress, she had no sense that she was wasting his time. But before the day of their meeting came everything was changed. On Sunday the 29th General Brière de l'Isle's despatch from Hanoi threw the city into alarm and Thérèse contrived for the Divertissements a new verse, bidding her audience

> *"Be at ease,*
> *The bad Chinese*
> *Are* not *at the gates of Paris."*

But she was too late. Jules Ferry could not weather the storm. His majority, seeing the elections a few months ahead, deserted him; on Monday the Government fell; a scramble for office began, an inelegant scramble above all for the Ministry of the Interior which would control the official candidatures, and Courcelet, himself independent of office, a broker between all parties, the man above all others who was believed to have his ear to the ground, received a stream of callers at his rooms in the Palais Royal. On Thursday, a note from him said: "Noon impossible. Forgive me—impossible all day. Please come very late—after your supper at Maubant's."

Afraid of disappointing Templéraud, she showed him the message. If, after supper, he would go straight to her flat, she would follow him there when she left the Palais Royal. "You always come

first," she said, "and if you'd rather I didn't go to Philippe, I can easily get out of it. After all, it is he who has changed our appointment. I can easily say *no*?"

She said this with eager questioning, but he replied that Courcelet must not be disappointed. "He must be desperately busy. If he makes time to see you in the middle of the night, it wouldn't be courteous—"

"Then you mustn't stay awake for me. Go to bed and go to sleep. I have never come in and found you in my bed, asleep."

Templéraud put his arm round her. "As if we were married?"

She took breath.

"But in fact," he continued, "I think I won't go to your flat to-night. I have work to do in the morning. I must be up early, and it would do me no harm to work late."

"You mean you won't come to Maubant's?"

"I think not, Thérèse. Not to-night. I'll go home and have some supper on a tray. Then I can work on steadily."

"Of course," she said. "You must always do that independently of me. What is the work to be? My songs or the symphony?"

He replied that he would work on the symphony, he had found that it was always best to do so in long stretches, late at night.

"I'm glad," she said. "I like to think of you working in that way. I shall think of you as I come home from Philippe's. *Shall* you be working then, I wonder?"

"That depends on what time you leave *him*."

She put her hand on his arm. "You're not jealous? You don't mind?"

"But, my darling, why should I be jealous?"

She enjoyed her visit to Courcelet. It renewed the spirit in her to observe the gallant detachment of this man whose worldliness was the armour of his acceptances. He *was* capable of acerbity, of an ironic lightness at her expense, of an extreme vanity, yet in all things he was temperate, a possessor of himself who chose even his faults as a man chooses a vintage, and in whom, it seemed, anger and self pity and jealousy, all the resentments of life, had, like once-

jagged stones, been worn smooth by the drip of experience. Even in his dressing gown and slippers he preserved the effect of one who had been a young dandy under Louis-Philippe and who had spent his life in cultivating a sense of proportion. In the past, in this room, she had come to him as his mistress. Any but he might now have appeared to suffer or have fallen into a mood of romantic melancholy. Courcelet, instead, when he had shown her his Tissot, talked eagerly and at once of the costume of the Renaissance, pulled out books from his shelves and spread their illustrations before her on the hearth rug; he settled the problem of Templéraud's cap with authority but not in haste, and, when she thanked him, replied simply that everyone liked being consulted on his own subject.

"But you have others," she said, running her hand over a pile of newspapers that lay on a stool beside his chair.

"Politics?" he answered. "Ah, that reminds me. I have an idea for you. You may know—or indeed you may not—that the Gambettists are hanging on Freycinet's doorbell. They think that, when the smoke clears away, they will find him at the head of the Government. Probably they are wrong. He will be a member of the Government, but what he wants is the Foreign Office for the time being. I wish you'd chip the Gambettists a little; they're a good target for a verse. Would this do—or something like it?"

She took the piece of paper he handed to her and tried the words silently with her lips. "Yes," she said, "it's good—and it's in character for Barbet. It's the angle from which he'd look at the thing."

"Who?"

"Barbet," she answered in surprise. "I said Barbet."

"You did, Thérèse, I know. But which Barbet? I gave you that scrap of paper, you read it, you used his name. Which was on your mind—your own vine grower or the fictitious character you have created in your songs?"

"Oh, I was thinking of the songs."

"I see. That was what I wanted to know. Is the man forgotten?"

"No," she answered, "but why do you speak of him?"

"Because it's so long since you spoke of him, Thérèse."

She answered with fire "I was a fool about him long enough Nothing could ever have come of it. I am happy now. Why spoil that?

Tolerance and good manners were always stronger in Courcelet than a desire to press for the truth Intellectual curiosity would tempt him to probe into the minds of others, but, unless they were politicians, he would cease instantly if they winced Now he turned up the collar of his dressing gown and settled more deeply into his chair, allowing his thought, as he watched her troubled face, to proceed unexpressed No mistress of his had given him so much pleasure, and none stirred in him so profound a compassion

'You and I, Thérèse," he said at last, "we dramatize ourselves For years I cast myself for the wrong part At root I am a historian, as you know, a historian of the past or the present—it makes no odds, but I saw myself as a statesman without having the capacity, the bluntness, the thickness of skin, without having even the taste for it For a time diplomacy was a substitute, but still I was cast for the wrong part. And now, this room People say I'm mad to live here. 'Above the arcades of the Palais Royal' they say, 'how do you hear yourself speak?' And it is true that a military band in the garden can be irksome on a summer's evening when it is too hot to shut the windows and you aren't in the mood for it. But the other side is quiet as the grave and I don't want both sides to be quiet as the grave—that is to be premature I like my Palais Royal and the glitter of the arcades and the foolish pop-gun they fire at noon This is my setting Thérèse—books, pictures, you at near two in the morning to ask about a renaissance cap and all day the would be statesmen—the great men whom everyone will forget—have been coming to me Why? Because I don't compete Because I don't want office. Because I'm no one And because I know I am the barometer And why do you suppose, I know? Because they tell me. I am the best informed newspaper in Paris Why? Because I don't publish my information I have power Under any government I can have what little things I want—any *little* thing, a post for one man, a privilege for another, any *little* thing because all I want is little things. Oh yes, still I am dramatizing myself I love to sit here and

watch them come to me. I take care that, in going, they shan't meet on the stairs, as if this were a well-regulated brothel, and I remark with interest the weakness of human nature which, having come with such secrecy and gone with such discretion, so often leaves its gloves behind Those are young Monsieur Clemenceau's gloves on the marble table He was my last caller I haven't put them away. The gloves of Waldeck-Rousseau are already safely in the drawer I keep them all as Lord Byron, I am told, collected locks of hair from each of his mistresses You see? Yes, I am dramatizing myself still But in my true *rôle* at last I sit here History and beauty come to me And you? But that, you will say, is not my concern—and indeed it is not"

"I have often wondered," she said, wishing to avoid the discussion of Barbet to which, she feared, he might return, "why you bother your head with Clemenceau and Waldeck-Rousseau and the rest"

"Because, Therese I do not wish to be ambitious, and there is no surer corrective to ambition than to watch politicians scrambling for the boats when the ship is sinking And in any case I am sometimes given an opportunity to serve France, though, if one is mixed in politics, one must do that by stealth But what the world will remember me for—if it remembers me at all—is that I bought Manet when others didn t and was your lover for a little while when others weren't And I shall be remembered for that collection of gloves. How strange it is," he added, his eyes on the ceiling, 'I have been talking for the sake of talking and you have been silent for the sake of being silent, and the little vine grower, whom we have been so considerately avoiding, has been present in both our minds" He leaned forward now, the cord of his dressing-gown dangling from his extended hands 'I assure you if that door were to open and he to walk into the room, it would seem to me the most natural thing in the world"

Thérèse looked at the door "I must go," she said "Before I go, may I write a letter at your table?"

"So late? But certainly"

"I shall deliver it on the way home"

She wrote to Templéraud

MY DARLING,

I want to think of no one but you I have been talking to Philippe—I am in his rooms now, just going—but I have been thinking of you at work No one wishes to be disturbed at work, but I know that if I had been working alone for hours with no prospect of seeing you, and suddenly a note from you tumbled through my letter-box, I should be happy and work better because I wasn't lonely any more So I shall drop this in at your door on the way home to say I love you

THÉRÈSE

When she had finished this, she found that there were tears in her eyes, and she turned abruptly to Courcelet, intending to say "Oh, that is nothing—tears. It means nothing, they come so easily I can turn them on," but she had taken longer to write than she had known, and Courcelet, when she looked at him, was asleep An idea that amused her came into her mind. She was wearing long kid gloves which she had turned back at the wrist Now she drew them off and laid them across Courcelet's knee As she stooped, a tear, the existence of which she had forgotten, ran down her cheek When she stood up her great eyes were sparkling, and the temptation to disturb Templeraud at his work and go in to him fell upon her with the force, the delight, the quickening of mortality remembered To go to him now, contrary to her expectation or his, would have the joy of being given a present for no reason or of sitting down at a cafe and sharing a bottle of champagne in the middle of a hot summer s morning The taste of that champagne was on her lips and the chill of the glass under her fingers as she walked cautiously down the stairs of Courcelet's lodging and, with a hug of her cloak round her shoulders let herself out into the Rue Montpensier

It was dark and silent, but there was spring in the darkness Near the Français a cab was standing, she hesitated, but the cabman was asleep, the horse rolled his eye at her, the white of his eye swam gigantically in the beam of a street lamp, and she laughed aloud as he turned his head to stare after her—he was a horse by Caran d Ache And on the way here, my darling, I met a horse by Caran d'Ache!

watch them come to me I take care that, in going, they shan't meet on the stairs, as if this were a well-regulated brothel, and I remark with interest the weakness of human nature which, having come with such secrecy and gone with such discretion, so often leaves its gloves behind Those are young Monsieur Clemenceau's gloves on the marble table He was my last caller I haven't put them away The gloves of Waldeck-Rousseau are already safely in the drawer I keep them all as Lord Byron, *I am told, collected locks of hair from* each of his mistresses You see? Yes, I am dramatizing myself still But in my true rôle at last I sit here History and beauty come to me And you? But that, you will say, is not my concern—and indeed it is not

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"Because, Therese, I do not wish to be ambitious, and there is no surer corrective to ambition than to watch politicians scrambling for the boats when the ship is sinking And in any case I am sometimes given an opportunity to serve France, though, if one is mixed in politics, one must do that by stealth But what the world will remember me for—if it remembers me at all—is that I bought Manet when others didn't and was your lover for a little while when others weren't And I shall be remembered for that collection of gloves How strange it is, he added, his eyes on the ceiling, I have been talking for the sake of talking and you have been silent for the sake of being silent, and the little vine grower whom we have been so considerately avoiding, has been present in both our minds" He leaned forward now, the cord of his dressing gown dangling from his extended hands '*I assure you if that door were to open and* he to walk into the room, it would seem to me the most natural thing in the world"

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"So late? But certainly"

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but it was a smell that pleased her because it was in coming to Etienne that she had grown familiar with it She moved quickly and with her eyes fast shut

As her fingers were turned by the first bend of the hand rail, she heard the street door close. Whoever had entered began at once to climb the stairs and Therèse advanced more quickly, if she were overtaken she would have to make her presence known in the darkness but if she kept her distance ahead, the new comer would turn aside into a flat on one of the landings below Etienne's The new comer did not turn aside. The footsteps passed the first landing and the second Their advance was regular and assured Therese thought suddenly This is a visitor for Etienne

There was a remaining possibility that this might not be so a third landing on which lived two families, a young student with his father and mother, and, opposite them, a widower with two small daughters. The student might be returning late. Thérese hesitated. If she went on he might vanish behind her and the footsteps cease. She wished to believe this but could not The footsteps were a woman's. They were drawing nearer, soon Therese would be visible from below and she wished only to be hidden A weak oil lamp was burning in a wall bracket. It illumined a curtain, hung on a semicircular rail, which was used to conceal an earthenware sink, now partly exposed The tap was thinly running Behind this curtain Thérèse hid herself

When she saw Annette s face rise above the stairs, she remembered that Templeraud had once said of her ' She is like you,' and her left arm and her leg and the whole of her left side began to ache, the pain ran up to the base of her skull and she closed her eyes, hearing the footsteps pass and go upward, then a tapping on his door a signal the door opening their voices, the door shut It was she who had entered she felt his arm about her and the warmth of his lamp she was beginning to hold out to him the letter she had written at Courcelet s and to say, as she had imagined herself saying, "You see, I am my own postman," when she found the letter in her hand it was wet and her hand was wet, she must have held them near the tap and she opened her eyes

Should she go in to see Templéraud or drop the letter and be gone before he opened his door? Perhaps he had done his work and was already asleep Perhaps he was working still and her coming would be an interruption I ought not to stay! I will slide the letter in quietly, so quietly that he will not even come to the door As she walked down the Rue de Rivoli, past the Oratoire, her mind was so firm against temptation that she was able to enjoy the virtue of having resisted it, but when she turned into the Rue des Bourdonnais and knew that one lamp only divided her from the little street that she called the Rue Etienne, though its name was Rue du Paon, it seemed to her foolish to have walked nearly a kilometre, to be almost on his doorstep and to run away

The winter is really over, she thought, next Sunday will be Easter Day, and the long spring and summer flowed into her blood, the warm nights that were coming, the drives out of Paris to drink milk in the Bois at five in the morning, the scent of trees at daybreak when the sun was slanting up into their branches Soon the vine-buds would be opening at Roussignac, swelling through their woolly covers, and showing the crimson points of their tiny leaves On the edge of the vineyards, the cherry-trees would blossom, the Guigne de *la Maune* which was *her own cherry-tree because she remembered* her mother telling her its name nearly twenty years ago at St Brice. There was a stinging in her throat because she was so happy, and she longed to sing, to dance, to stand on tiptoe and stretch out her arms as though she were awaking from a rapturous sleep She stood still, raised herself on tiptoe and parted her cloak that the air might be on her throat and breast, then, hearing footsteps in the Rue des Bourdonnais approach from the direction of the river, she said to herself They'd think me mad! and turned rapidly into the side-street

She had her own key to the building in which Templéraud lived His lodgings were on the top floor Far above her there was a gleam of illumination perhaps from the little wall lamp on the third landing, but the lower flights were in darkness She began to climb slowly, her hand on the rail

The woodwork gave out a musty smell as though it were sodden,

but it was a smell that pleased her because it was in coming to Etienne that she had grown familiar with it She moved quickly and with her eyes fast shut.

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Except the trickle of water, there was no sound in the building She seized the tap, but the brass was hard on the bone of her thumb When she looked at the stair head, where Annette's face had been, there was no face So she is in his room She has kicked off her shoes and is on his sofa, he is taking the lobe of her ear between his lips But it is not true He was surprised by her coming She came with a message I will go up and knock But Annette must have had the key to the outer door

Thérese began then to remember the many assurances and tokens of love that she had given Templeraud and the happiness they had shared and the work they had done together What had been became merged in what would have been, so that all her life appeared to be found and lost in him, and this spring and summer were cut off, and time was drained away like water from a basin I will go away, I will go away, she thought, but she dreaded the street, the Rue Etienne where she had been happy, and she listened and listened, saying to herself that truth would turn suddenly as a dream turns, his door would open, Annette come out, the spring and the summer and the pulse in her blood return She listened, but heard only the thin trickle of water in the sink

There is no one belonging to me It is a long way to the Ile St Louis, the flat will be empty letters on the floor On my dressing-table in the theatre I left my brooch In his pocket, on the chair beside his bed, within reach of her hand is the card case, if she stretches out her hand she can take it and open it and see my Meissonier, which I gave him And he will say Therese gave it me' But not so, they are asleep, hours have passed light through the slats is crawling on his arm He will say Therese gave it me,' but she will be clever, she won t laugh she will say it is beautiful and yawn and stretch herself

Thérèse moved on to the landing and looked about her There was a window on the staircase which she had not seen before, a streak of oily smoke blackened the chimney of the wall lamp, which was dying Soon the caretaker will go down and open the door, she thought, and steadied herself on the hand rail of the stairs She was glad of the smell of the lamp because it was outside her brain and

called her out, away from nothingness, to touch and smell and thirst. After two flights she could not hear the water, it was gone, but two flights lower she heard it again

It was morning in the streets Soon she saw under her eyes the stone steps of a church, people in black were going and coming, she went in and found that it was Good Friday She wanted only to sit down but when she sat the pain in her head returned, and she said I am not waiting for anything Why am I here? I don't know this church. She started up I am in evening dress I have nothing on my head She drew the hood of her cloak over her head and thrust her cheek into the cold silk Outside, a cab was standing The man, who had driven her before, smiled and recognized her, and she asked him gratefully what news he had of his son in Tonkin

Chapter 9

WHEN NEXT TEMPLÉRAUD WISHED TO COME TO her flat in the Île St. Louis, she did not refuse, nor, when he took her in his arms, did she resist, but she told him that he must no longer think of himself as her lover.

"Why, Thérèse?"

"Because it is over."

He did not argue or protest. A smile moved on his face He looked at her with a moment's curiosity, but was careful to ask only:

"Have we quarrelled?"

"No. We shall work together unless you are a fool."

At supper at Maubant's she stretched her arm across the table. "Etienne, please give me my Meissonier " She did not return it or he ask that it should be returned

Never by any word of hers should he be allowed to guess the reason for her having rejected him She must have some part to sustain her, and the discipline of continued intimacy with him and Annette gave her strength; it demanded a continual effort, a fierce pride, to behave in their company as if she were blind to their desire for each other.

With Templéraud, she went in her renaissance dress to the bal Gaillard. As they arrived, the painter Jacquet swaggered into the Place Malesherbes on horseback, wearing a costume of the period of Henri III, a white pourpoint embroidered with gold, a sweeping plume to his hat, a sword at his side; and the crowd waved and laughed and shouted "Vive le Roy!" Her hand tightened on Templéraud's arm. She was delighted by Jacquet; his was an absurdity after her own heart; in a moment, she too would have been waving;

she and Templeraud would have been gay together. But suddenly she was lonely and the more lonely because he was near her

April and May were hard months, the harder because she would not permit herself the relaxation of sorrow, which she condemned as self pity She drove herself to work and pleasure, and permitted herself no slackening in the pace of her life. Her table at Maubant's began to change its character, it became harsher, more strident, richer, conforming more nearly to fashion, less to personal taste Men came there, and attached themselves to Thérèse, men whom she despised but now invented reasons to admire 'Why these?' asked Courcelet "The poor rabble of adorers at the Écume was better than these! And you take them home with you and sit up all night? Is it true?

Yes"

'Why?"

'Because there are some miseries that make one fastidious, Philippe—so fastidious inside that what happens outside doesn't matter a damn. I could go to bed with all of them in turn and make each believe it was an adventure and that I hadn't a trouble in the world!'

"In fact, you don't?"

In fact, not yet You had better be the first if it pleases you"

He smiled the insult away, and tried both to draw the truth from her and to [illegible]

light. [illegible]

silen [illegible] he had found, the silence broke, the story poured out but now his method was unavailing—she was an actress who could play comedy the better when her world was in ruins

And how closely she was bound to her comedy, her tragedy, her seemingly brilliant and various life! The theatre, the restaurant, her flat on the Quai d Orleans—her flat, the restaurant, the theatre! "But you she said "you and your politics—your circle is as narrow! He examined himself, it was far from being true, he could shut out politics to-morrow and still have a full life History, the theatre, a little racing, friends—friends whose lives and whose families interested and amused him apart from any bearing they

might have on his own fortunes "Ah," she said, "that is because everything has come easily to you You have a family and a back ground You have never had to fight Or at worst you fight with your back against a comfortable, reassuring wall I have no wall I fight in the open I am surrounded"

It had long been his purpose to draw her out of this desperate encirclement, but whatever diversions he planned, whatever invitations he contrived, she took her encirclement with her and could sustain interest in nothing that was not, directly or indirectly, a battle for or against Therese Despreux Now more than ever was this true. She seemed scarcely to listen to news he brought her from a world outside her own unless it was news that could be turned to a verse Even Victor Hugo, he found was grist to her mill

On a Sunday morning with his carriage at her door to drive her into the May sunshine, he stood in her sitting room beside her walnut desk, looking sometimes with critical approval at the reflection in her mirror of the upward wave of silver above his ears and sometimes at the clear sky above Notre Dame

"*Notre Dame de Paris!*"

She too was beside the desk going through her strange ritual into which he had long ceased to inquire of dropping into it yet another unopened letter from her vine grower of Roussignac

"Why do you say that?"

"Have you ever read the book?"

"What book?"

"Victor Hugo *Notre Dame de Paris* Victor Hugo is dying," he said, rolling the head of his tie pin between forefinger and thumb and stretching his neck which, though a trifle loose in the collar, was still he decided, not the neck of an old man

"Dying?" she exclaimed Are you sure? Is that true?"

The note of personal alarm in her voice surprised and gratified him

"That touches you, my dear? It will touch all France"

She locked the walnut drawer the key clicked into a porcelain vase "You see, I use verses of his I shall have to change them"

'Bless you," he said, "so you will The choice of new ones ought not to be hard 'Sombre' was a favourite word of his" And having summoned her interest, he persisted, he would enjoy a discussion of Hugo as they drove out together, and he told her that on Thursday, after a dinner in honour of de Lesseps, Hugo had been taken ill Slow heart, congestion of the lungs Yesterday no worse, but no better

'Oh, the old fellow is a lion. He will fight on, but he knows where he is going He said to Lockroy 'My friend, it is a dead man who is talking to you.'"

By this time Therèse was ready to set out.

"We will drive to his house and drop a card," Courcelet said

They were not the only visitors In front of the little house a carriage was already drawn up when they arrived, two others awaited their turn

"There will be a book. I will write my name and return to you"

'Can I write my name?'

'Certainly He was glad not to have hesitated

By the time Thérese had stood under the scalloped canopy that stretched out over the door, and had examined the lamps set in the wall, and had waited until outgoing callers had squeezed past her, and had written her name in the book she had acquired a personal, an almost possessive, interest in the poet lying upstairs Beside the house tall trees looked out over his garden wall

"I hope his room is on the garden?"

Courcelet nodded.

'Then he's quiet,' she said 'I'm glad You know, he might recover even though he is so old'

She was silent as they drove on

"If not she said unexpectedly, 'it will be history Wouldn't it be strange to know, when you were dying, that that day would be remembered because it was the day on which you, Victor Hugo, died?'

Courcelet patted her hand "I doubt whether he cares"

'I should' said Thérèse Then she sighed 'Oh dear do you ever have your feelings hopelessly mixed? At one moment I feel like

all the poems ever written about ambition, and I wish I could die in a small house with a garden, and people near me who love me and prop themselves against walls with handkerchiefs to their eyes or kneel at the bedside and hold my hand And that seems much better than being famous Then I think suppose they *did* love me and hold my hand and dangled wet handkerchiefs, and I *wasn't* famous —I should have failed, and I should say 'I'm dying, there isn't time to make good' And I should sit up in bed and say· 'I can't die yet I'm not ready I can't die a failure I'm not ready Bring me some soup! Bring me some *strong* soup!' When I die, come to my bed and tell me I am famous, Philippe If you tell me I have succeeded, I shall believe you I suppose," she added, staring at the coachman's back, "Victor Hugo has it every way—fame and love as well, a home and the Pantheon Will they give him the Panthéon?"

"This Government?" said Courcelet "I wonder It would be almost too much to ask them to make up their minds They might offend some part of their majority But he ought to have the Panthéon"

Thérese meditated in silence, the taut silence in which her plots were hatched

"Now listen," she said "I like Victor Hugo I have recited his poems often and often since Plence scoffed at him, and now I have written my name in his book I am sure there's a poem of his about the Panthéon?'

"There is Alphonse Nourrit sang it in the Pantheon in '31 Five hundred choristers, my father told me The Marseillaise, the Parisienne of Casimir Delavigne and then the Hymne of Victor Hugo He can't have been thirty"

"Yes, yes," said Thérèse impatiently, "but how does it go?'

"I can manage the first lines I haven't your memory, Therese

"Ceux qui pieusement sont morts pour la patrie
Ont droit qu'à leur cercueil—"

"'*La foule vienne et prie!*'" cried Therèse She ran through the stanza at high speed but did not find what her memory echoed

'Somewhere is the *word* 'Pantheon'! That is what I want!' She shut her eyes and clasped her hands Then at last—

> "*C'est pour ces morts, dont l'ombre est ici bienvenue,*
> *Que le haut Panthéon élève dans la nue,*
> *Au-dessus de Paris, la ville aux mille tours,*
> *La reine de nos Tyrs et de nos Babylones,*
> *Cette couronne de colonnes*
> *Que le soleil levant redore tous les jours!*"

She put up her parasol with a click "'*La ville aux mille tours le soleil levant redore tous les jours*' More inspired lines have been written Still, there he is in that little house waiting for the Panthéon, and he shall have it You must pull strings too'

'Does it matter, Therese?'

'Well,' she said, the Panthéon may not matter to him and it may not matter in itself, but it does matter if I am going to sing about it!'

He smiled for he knew that she was trailing the coat of her own egotism he smiled then, but afterwards his lips set. How impossible it was to draw her out of her own encirclement! Hugo had interested and touched her, and yet, in jest or in earnest, her thoughts were back to the Divertissements within a quarter of an hour

He wished to help her, but it was easier to let her have her head It touched his vanity to know that what he thought of as his privileges were restored, though he did not avail himself of them except in allowing the world to believe that Thérèse Despreux was his mistress, and it was a part of his dandyism, a part indeed of his fear of old age, not to preach to ladies. Preaching, he thought, is a privilege of romantic youths who can't be suspected—or suspect themselves—of being capable of nothing else. But he remained unquiet, he could not hide from himself the bleak and barren desperation of her mood, and one evening more than a week later he [illegible]

[illegible] in the cemetery of Père Lachaise,

the Government was fluttered and politicians were running hither and thither Courcelet had little energy left to struggle with a woman, but he was stubborn, her refusal piqued him, he insisted "You have always told me that at least I have first claim on you"

"You are content on those terms?"

"That is not the point They are the best I can get until you sicken of the others"

"I have sickened long ago"

"Well?"

"They are—oh!" she cried, "what do you mean by talking of them to me? They are not things to be talked about You who are discreet, who are not a jealous boy, once you knew when to be silent! And now " She clenched her fists in the effort of control. "Philippe, I'm sorry," she continued when she could allow herself to speak again, "I'm truly sorry, you are kind and generous, you have a right to think what you please and do what you please, but, for a little while do not always say what you think"

But Courcelet would not be led from his purpose, though it was against his nature and his breeding to be importunate

"Listen Therese I am not asking to be your lover to-night I want to talk"

"Why to night? Why at all? What use is there in talking?"

"Because" he said "I choose to night"

"You are being a fool Very well As you choose I was trying to save you from humiliation Someone else will come"

"Then, Therese, you will send him away"

"Ah," she said with a smile that hadn't occurred to me How clever you are! You have provided my entertainment for the evening"

In her sitting room, she gave him wine sat down and waited This was her rigid defence and he admired it She knows as well as I do, he thought that it's not in my part to lecture actresses for the good of their souls and though I wait all night, she'll not give me a cue or take one He smiled at his own discomfiture and looked at her over the edge of his glass hoping that she too would smile, accepting his surrender, and that their conversation would flow on with

its accustomed ease. But her lips did not move or her eyes answer She regarded him fixedly, with expectation and, he thought, with fear Her body had slackened, he saw her as she might be when she was an old woman, and he said to himself What the girl needs is a priest.

"Now that you are here—" she began "I am listening Have you anything to say worth saying?"

"No, Thérèse I beg your pardon. I haven't the character You need—"

"What?"

"A priest"

"Because I am dying?"

He turned from the truth in that, rose, clasped his hands behind him and walked across the room to the window "I beg your pardon, Thérèse I am of no use to you It makes me ridiculous, and it's my special folly that I'm afraid of being ridiculous I wasn't born to play in tragedy"

"Weren't you? I have never known you play in anything else. Isn't it tragedy never to be simple, to be always afraid that you are 'playing the wrong part,' to be everlastingly bargaining with yourself and cheating yourself—to be incapable of loving?"

"All that is true," he answered. "I said 'I haven't the character'"

She followed him to the window and put her hand in his "Poor Philippe! Poor Philippe!"

He turned swiftly I came here to comfort *you*!"

"Poor Philippe! You hadn't a chance. I have played you clean off the stage."

Seeing the trap and delighting in the skill with which she had baited it he struggled yet "That is why I said you needed a priest."

"Oh, my father is a priest. A priest is a man"

"That isn't true."

"No," she answered, "it isn't, but it was something to say"

"You despise men?"

"Not more than a good barmaid despises humanity But *one ob-*

serves that they all come for the same thing You know Philippe, it's interesting—they don't all begin like that, but with me they all come to it It's something in me, I suppose, it's my fault I can't resist it—at some point I turn on the current, just to see the manikin hop and make sure that he hops like all the other manikins Then I pay for it To him it becomes more and more important All the men who appear at my bar become drunkards—except you."

"I—"

"Ah, you are different, of course!"

"To how many others have you said that?"

"How many, do you think, have asked me that question? But you *are* different, Philippe Do you know why?'

"Yes," he answered "I know why Because I am old"

"Because you do love me—in so far as you are capable of it Or the fault may be mine Perhaps I should say 'so far as *I* am capable of allowing any man to love me' Oh, that wouldn't be true if the *man were my equal or if he were more than I am, but no man ever is* They are all like actors who don't know their parts I have to carry the scene—I have *to*, it's true, they are so little"

"Even Templeraud?'

She would say nothing against Templeraud "He was a baby,' she said "Rather a greedy baby Do you remember that night—I suppose it was only two months ago—when I came to talk to you about his costume for the bal Gaillard? That night I—"

"What happened, Thérese?'

She shook her head "*I was only going to say that I remember* he tried the costume on in front of the long mirror in my bedroom"

There was a quiet, secretive knocking on the outer door Thérese stiffened, and Courcelet put his hand over her wrist

"Let him knock, child, whoever *he* is We understand each other, you and I Don't be frightened Don't be ashamed"

She whispered 'I will tell him that—"

"No, let him knock"

The knocking was repeated

"*From the street* he may have seen the light in my window"

"And if so?"

"I mean, he won't go away"

The knocking was repeated

"For him," she said, "it may be like the tap running"

What she meant, Courcelet had not an idea, but he answered, "Not in the least, that is altogether different," and tightened his hold on her and forced her to sit down, seating himself on the sofa beside her

There was one more knocking, loud, abrupt, angry, then a long silence.

"Go to the door and look."

She obeyed, returned, stood before him like a child that is come into a strange room.

"He is gone," she said and, falling on her knees beside the sofa, clutched her face in her arms and began to cry with hard sobs, rending and slow, as though her body would break.

"It was not Templéraud at the door," Courcelet said "You have forgotten, Thérese, my dear It wasn't Templeraud"

"What was it, then? You see, you see, you don't know."

She sat back, shameless of her distorted face.

"It wasn't he, Thérese."

So sure was he of his cleverness in having discerned the twist of her mind and the substitution it had made that he repeated like an old nurse "It wasn't he at the door, it wasn't Etienne."

"Oh no," she answered, "certainly it was not Etienne."

The need to take charge of her, to command her without regard for her resistances, appeared to Courcelet. He had lost his bearings and feared that, if she were left to kneel in mid floor, she might break into ungovernable hysteria. No tears were on her face, her sobs came singly and at long intervals He stared at her, his action paralysed some echo in his brain uselessly telling him that, if a woman became hysterical, the way to shock her out of it was to slap her face. I couldn't, he said to himself, I couldn't, she is too lonely Why did I come here? And now, how the devil do I go away? He decided that, if she were in bed, then he could safely leave her

"Thérese," he said, "drink this." He gave her the wine in his

own glass She swallowed it and held out the glass, which he refilled, she drank again—the glassful—without pause for breath

"The music-master in Angoulême," she said, "threw his glass against the wall I wonder what has become of—"

"Go to bed, Thérese"

"Yes" But she did not move "Don't be frightened, Philippe. I shall be sane again in the morning I'm only acting I'm lonely I want to be sure you don't go away"

But Courcelet had heard that mad people were so adroit that they would pretend to be sane to elude the watchfulness of others and he said stubbornly

"Get up and undress and go to bed, Thérèse"

The corners of her mouth went down but she obeyed at once. He waited until there was silence in her bedroom, then entered The bedclothes were drawn high, he could not see her face, but knew from her breathing that she was asleep He blew out her candle, returned to the sitting room, cautiously gathered his hat, his cloak, his stick, walking on tiptoe, extinguished the lamp and went out

No sooner had the outer door closed behind him than she leaned up into the darkness and felt for matches She was careful to do all that she did without haste, noticing everything, feeling everything, the gilt on her swan's high wings the cool linen under her leg as she slid forward, the down in her slippers as her feet entered them Candle in hand she went to the walnut desk, shook out a key from a high porcelain jar that stood on it, unlocked a drawer and, with a swift movement of her hand gathered to her the bundle of letters it contained Then, as though she had committed a theft, she ran to her bed, the candle-flame flat and streaming and lay on her back, her breath audible, her heart apace

When her breath was quiet, she turned on her side, intending to read the letters in the order of their dates She had a simple hunger for the news they would contain of men and places familiar to her but external to her present life, and she began to read with the undivided joy of rediscovering a story not forgotten though put away But before the first page was turned, she became aware of herself reading, her fingers released the paper, her eyes came up as though

she were being watched Even to read these letters seemed false to her now

Her fear of sentimentality, her abiding distrust of whatever gentleness of motive in herself threatened to loose the armour she wore against the world, suggested to her that the intuitive tenderness with which she had safeguarded these letters was a lie, and that she had deliberately hoarded them so that, in such a mood as this, she might dramatize the reading of them Her memory, seeking the instant in which the decision to read them had been made, drove her back and back, mercilessly pursuing, beyond her pretence of sleep while Courcelet was blowing out her candle, beyond what appeared now as her pretence of suffering and her pretence of madness while Theuriet was knocking at the outer door, to the spectacular and designed candour of her likening herself to a barmaid and saying, with the dagger of Templeraud's indifference twisting in its wound, that men became drunkards who— She tossed in her bed and sat erect, her hands pressing upward the flesh of her cheeks It had been then, in the midst of the contrived brutality of that speech, that Barbet had appeared in her mind her imagination had swept her on until she had believed, and not believed, that it was he at the door, until she had known that to-night, when she was alone, a fascinated spectator of her own repentances, she would fall into a luxury of self accusation, and at last, dragged upon the in turning spiral of her self-criticism, sleep

She lay down on her side again supported on her elbow, restless and confused, scorning her confusion—a stupidity, she had always said, of idle women who made pets of their consciences, and took them out and combed and frizzed and wept over them and put them away again Her remedy was in her job, in action, in the challenge of a new task, a new struggle, a new appetite that summoned the decisive energies of her mind In action, she knew, she was swift and fearless, robust in the whole experience of the senses—hungry with joy, thirsty with joy, a tigress for work, undaunted, unfailing And now she lay here without the will to read the letters or to put them away between night and morning, fingering the candle wax, without appetite even for sleep She jerked herself upright in the bed

Thérèse Despreux, you are a professional diseuse! But she could not rally, the old incantation was dead Thérèse Despreux! Thérèse Despreux! She slid down on to her pillow, sick at heart of this stale trick of calling herself by name If only there were a being on earth to whom it was not a name on a placard, to whom she belonged, who would seize and hold her, whose faith in her was stronger than her own distrust! Since her mother died, she had not known any such reassurance Her father had not recognized her Learning to shrink from his timid approaches, she had fallen away from the Church All her nightmares had been of isolation, and she had fought them by her genius to compel the attention of strangers to herself, by the challenge with which she cried her wares, by her boldness, her humour and anger, her refusal to be put down She had not dared be tired lest her protective self-reliance should fail her, but she had learned to mock, that she might not pity, herself, and this mocking voice, her own, turned to ridicule the impulse she now felt to surrender, to abdicate her prides and powers It seemed to her that, in remembering her father and mother and the unconsoled nightmares from which she had awakened, screaming, in the Cheval Pie, she was only playing the part of a little girl and playing it because to do so put a gloss of pathos on her failure to hold Templéraud Was even her desire to read Barbet's letters a sop thrown into the same tawdry drama? She raised the letters by thrusting her hand under a pile of them, and with indifference, almost with contempt, allowed them to slide from her palm She stared at them, yellow on the sheet

One night at Royan, the night after her walk through the woods with Madeleine, Courcelet had spoken of George Sand, the conversation had run to music and to Chopin, and Templéraud, echoing Plence as Thérèse now perceived, had attacked the Romantics, saying that they were sentimental, that they lied Cugnot had taken fire, not in defence of the Romantics, but in counter-attack upon those whose catchword for all feeling but hatred was "sentimentality" He had asked which was the greater lie—to be sentimental or to be paralysed by the fear of sentimentality? Was it not better, in art to be wrong in boldness than wrong in fear? And Courcelet had said "If I may be allowed to speak with authority, as one whose whole life

is a lie and certainly not a romantic one, I suggest that the greatest of lies is by self-consciousness to freeze the heart To be incapable of surrender is the final cowardice. The priests call it spiritual pride"

He is clever, my poor Philippe, Thérèse thought, there is point in everything he says, but it takes you no further. What he said then is true—perhaps it is true—it seemed true and I remember it, but, though it sounds like an answer, it is, like the answers of all clever men, only the question repeated, it is a phrase he has made, it goes on in the head. "To be incapable of surrender is the final cowardice" Poor Philippe! Poor Thérèse! You are pitying him because you dare not pity yourself If for a moment you were to cease to deafen yourself with your own name, you could not endure the silence.

Thérèse Despreux! Thérese Despreux! The name written on schoolbooks The name she had given to Plence when she was unknown What is your name? Therese Despreux. The name, on the hoardings, of the woman they paid to see at the Divertissements. Her own name and yet not hers The name on the envelopes "To be incapable of self-surrender is the final cowardice" Poor Philippe! The name of the girl lying in the great bed A name to freeze the heart

'If only I could stop arguing," Barbet had said, "then I should know what to do"

When did he say that? Perhaps at some time when he had been speaking to her about the glow worms in the prison She could not remember It is almost morning, she thought, the candle is down There was another beside it, partly burned, she lighted it and extinguished the first.

From the envelopes the plain handwriting looked up at her—her own name, the heavy Q of the Quai d Orleans, the word "Paris" in great capitals, as though it were the name of a foreign country The thought of his undemanding patience in writing, week after week, to her who did not answer, quieted her She began to read No letter was of great length, for Barbet kept near to his observation, the birds he saw and heard, the changes of river and hedgerow, the prog

ress of the fields, the vintage, the distillation Against this background the familiar figures appeared—his mother, "who becomes more gay as she grows older, and happier too, I think", Anton, who 'isn't such a villain as you suppose, Therèse. It's a bad day if I can't make him laugh at his own bluster", and "your father, who calls on me more often than a heretic has any right to expect, wanting news of you but never asking for it I would volunteer it if I had any' There was never a stronger hint than this that he required an answer "You have your own reasons for not writing, some day you will tell me what they were and I shall seem foolish not to have understood

Though he wrote seldom of himself, his letters produced in her a feeling of his presence in the flowers, the animals and even in the people he spoke of for he recognized no division between himself and them His mind was neither self abnegating nor self assertive He did not think the Others and I, he did not think I and the Others but seemed to be unaware of any opposition or boundary between himself and what he perceived To follow with him page by page the movement of the year brought to Thérèse a peace that she might not have known if she had read each letter when it came for their continuity included her even when he spoke of himself and her, one in Charente, the other in Paris their separation was of place only and accidental when he said that he loved her, his love was not an intensification of their two separated individualities there was no stress in it or crying out against the distance between them or possessive jealousy of her life remote from his, and she, who had believed a loving covetousness to be a sign and part of love itself, saw for the first time that there was an alternative to it that was not indifference—a fullness of recognition, a calm and passionate acceptance of unity within the ultimate unity of all sentient creatures

Understanding of these ideas came to her slowly as she read They were nowhere expressed in what he wrote but were instinct in the warmth and modesty of his writing His descriptions were not of external things towards which he looked outward but rather of a natural and, because natural a miraculous world of which he and she were a part He told her in January how on New Year's Day the children had followed the custom she knew well, going from door to

door in Roussignac for pennies, and in his writing he himself seemed to be one of the children—"Each door has an expression," he said 'Some are wolves' doors and frown, and you have to be brave to knock" He told how the fire brigade, in uniform and brass helmets, had come out even to the Maison Hazard to serenade him with bugles and drums how, when all the men had received their five franc pieces and their glasses of wine, he and they and his mother and old Quessot had clinked glasses together—

Bonne année, bonne santé
Et le paradis à la fin de vos jours

—"the old greeting," he said, "which I knew you wouldn't forget to give to your audience at the Divertissements It would be good and please them and draw them in Some people in an audience seem to need a lot of drawing in, just because they have paid and sit where they do, they behave as if the footlights *were a wall*" "I know that! I feel that! Thérese exclaimed under her breath as she read, for he spoke in terms of her experience as though it were his own, as though he also had stood on a stage and felt the tug of an audience like the tug of a fish on a line, and her heart beat faster as she turned the page, for had it not been on the morning of New Year's Day itself that she had remembered the old greeting and resolved to use it, proud then of so apt a trick of showmanship?

As his letters passed on through the winter into the spring, her sense of isolation fell away from her, her heart lightened, but, when her eye fell upon the page he had dated *Easter, 1885*, the venom and anguish of those days struck at her afresh. I feel separated from my prisoners," he wrote. "I am ashamed that it is so and feel it to be wrong You told me once that, in my relation to them, I seemed to you to be a prisoner myself, and I am sure that is true and that it is wrong But I feel that, since they are condemned and must be prisoners somewhere I should be only a coward and do no good by washing my hands of them. Can I not help them and be of some use? That is my dilemma. I am hedged in, I argue, I think too much about myself—whether I should be doing right or doing wrong to give up the prison—and so I make myself important and separate,

from which nothing good can come Now if you were in a prison I should let you out if I could, and if a wild bird were in a cage I should open the door, and if an animal were in a trap I should release it That is simple enough But I can't stop arguing about the prisoners because, even if I were to give up the prison, that wouldn't set them free "

When she had done reading this, she put down the letter and looked at the envelopes that were as yet unopened Thérèse Despreux Therese Despreux It was no longer an isolated and warning name, an insane emphasis had been lifted from it She read it tranquilly as she might have read a name not hers I will read the others in the morning, she said to herself, and knew, as she lay down to sleep, that her first waking thought would be of gladness that she had still to hear of Roussignac in April and May In the darkness she remembered that more than a week perhaps a fortnight, had passed since a letter came from him Her memory was accurate at will, she could turn it backwards, day by day like the pages of a book, and she remembered that, as she was putting away the last letter she had received, Courcelet, beside her at the walnut desk had been saying to her that Hugo was dying 'And to Lockroy he said 'My friend it is a dead man who speaks to you'' It was on a Sunday, it was two Sundays ago To-day was Wednesday the 27th She counted on her fingers ten days Sometimes there were intervals of more than ten days between Barbet's letters, but she sat up in bed again and relighted her candle She would read the last

It was dated Thursday May 14 It told of buttercups in the meadows and of the little green bunches of the montpellier maple 'full of bees" 'I went to see your father as I came home from Roussignac The wallflower on the church is out I told him I should soon be in Paris so that he might send a message if he wished He said 'Ask her, if she has a holiday to come here in the summer' I shall see him again before I leave but I expect I shall not write again There is always much to be arranged before I go on these journeys, particularly now that Pierre dislikes so much coming near the prison It is not only that it takes him away from other work but that he positively dislikes it He has to be persuaded He seldom comes even into

the house if he can avoid it, except on special occasions when we invite him though he and Renée are always glad to see me if I visit them I shall go to the Hotel Bagnolet as usual, arriving probably during the afternoon of Thursday 28"

She imagined him in his corner, his head on one side, asleep in the train.

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"Ah, yes! Now, let me think. Surely I have heard that name before?"

"I sing and dance," said Thérèse. "Perhaps you have seen the name on placards."

The lady at the desk evidently had not. She shook her head and pursed her lips. "No . . No," she said, "it was—it was in some connexion with Monsieur Barbet—it was—ah, yes, one day he asked me—" She threw a wild glance at Thérèse and broke off, blushing in hot confusion. "Oh dear, oh dear, I was very foolish that day! Let it pass, let it pass, we are all foolish sometimes." She mustered her control. "I beg your pardon. It is an honour to know Mademoiselle Thérèse Despreux."

"And you?" said Therese.

"And I, mademoiselle?"

"You are not Madame Bagnolet?"

"Ah no, indeed no! . There! As you are a friend of Monsieur Barbet's, and as it was his father who gave me the name, you will not think it wrong if I tell you that I am always called Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz." She sighed and clasped her hands. "It is strange. Gentlemen forget that I am Mademoiselle Plon. I have had letters addressed to Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz."

"It is a gallant name," said Thérèse. "And I notice that you speak of him as Monsieur Barbet?"

"Did I do that? Well, I must be forgiven. I have known the family so long. But I am afraid," she added, with that unexpectedness which Thérèse had come to expect in her, "that Monsieur Barbet will never marry and have children. It would have been a pleasure to prepare a room for his son when he himself is gone."

"Gone!" Therèse exclaimed. "He must be less than thirty-five."

Mademoiselle d Austerlitz smiled pleasantly. "Yes, indeed," said she. "I suppose I must be very foolish. I forget that even I shall not live for ever. And now Victor Hugo *is dead*."

"You will go to the funeral?"

"Ah no, mademoiselle. The hotel is full. They say that there are

Chapter 10

THÉRÈSE WALKED ACROSS THE RIVER NEXT morning to the Hôtel Bagnolet and left there a note asking Barbet to come to her theatre if he reached Paris in time She gave it into the hands of the lady with yellow hair whom she found at a desk near the foot of the stairs At her question, this lady flicked the pages of a time-table and replied without looking at them that Monsieur Hazard was expected at three o'clock His room was prepared

"Every gentleman," she said, "has his own little ways No doubt you have observed that, madame?"

"Yes," Thérèse answered with a smile that the shadows of the passage concealed, "that is very true I have often observed it And yet," she added, unable to resist the temptation to argument with one whose knowledge of men was probably as extensive as her own, "and yet I have observed also that, from another point of view, there is a remarkable sameness in gentlemen"

The time-table was put down and patted The silver bangles tinkled merrily "That may be That may be But in a hotel at any rate their differences are more important—for example, Monsieur Hazard likes his bordeaux in half bottles, and, on the mantelpiece, pencils sharpened, and, in the cupboard, bread and cheese And, do you know, madame, I have always a feeling that he is a very happy gentleman That, you will agree, is rare Whatever happens, he is always pleasantly surprised For example, the pencils Always I put them there, but he is always pleasantly surprised as though I were giving him a present But you know him well, madame?"

"All my life," said Thérèse "Perhaps you will tell him I brought the note myself Mademoiselle Thérèse Despreux"

'Bonne annee, bonne santé
Et le paradis à la fin de vos jours

Is that a good song?"

"My God," he said, kissing her hand again, "what *has* happened to you Therèse? When you're in this mood, you would enchant the rebel angels. And look at your eyes!"

She examined them in her mirror "Yes, they are good to-night. They always become larger when I'm very happy or very unhappy"

"And at the moment?"

She jumped up and threw her arms round his neck. "Darling Cugnot! You must go now Come back at the end You'll know why"

But Barbet did not appear Late in the evening she sent a boy to the front of the house he returned to say that the ticket she had left at the box-office in the name of Monsieur Hazard had not been called for Cugnot and Plence being in her dressing room, she said that after all she would sup with them Because, throughout the evening, she had declared consistently that she would not be supping at Maubant's no one followed her there, but in the restaurant itself there were enough who knew her they stopped at her table on their way to their own they broke off from their parties to visit her, they loitered sat down lighted cigarettes, beckoned their companions over, and soon her table was full—ten men and two of their mistresses—the talk mounting like the stakes at a gambling table, voices and emphasis increasing and Therese found herself holding the bank with the same heady excitement that would have gripped her if the table had been glittering with gold pieces The room was hot, and heavy with smoke and the scent of flowers. She threw off a black lace wrap and felt a new heat of the air on her bare shoulders On the bald head of the banker Schnetz little beads of sweat were forming, she watched them gather and run like raindrops on a window pane, saw his silk handkerchief stick on his forehead and his lips suck at his champagne He and Eugene de Quergnon, a young man with a long pale moustache who had the interesting ambition to make

three hundred thousand visitors in Paris Some say even more. We have people who are not our clients, people we have never seen before"

"Then Monsieur Barbet was lucky to get his room"

"Ah no, mademoiselle, that is understood"

Thérèse held out her hand to say good-bye "Tell me, why are you so devoted to him?"

Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz emerged from her shadows and her little feet hissed down the passage towards the door "Devoted? Yes. Are you surprised? It is—now, how shall I put it?—it is that he and I, Monsieur Barbet and I—" She broke off, smiling in defeat and took Thérèse's hand between her own "Voyons Il est toujours content de la vie"

It had so delighted Thérèse to come upon someone who knew Barbet and would talk of him that she at once allowed her imagination to transform Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz into a fantastic and legendary creature, who had known all the generations of Hazard and who would live for ever under her pile of yellow hair I will send her tickets for the theatre—but does she ever come out? Thérèse wondered Does she ever sleep or eat? Or does she live always at that desk with the colours of the fanlight on the tiles at her feet? At a florist's she bought two bouquets of roses and addressed them to the Hôtel Bagnolet—one "For Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz," and the other "For Monsieur Barbet's room"

She cancelled an engagement for supper and that night refused all invitations

"Thérèse," said Cugnot, seated beside her dressing-table while she made up for the stage, "what has happened to you? Your eyes are shining Are you up to mischief or have you been making good resolutions?"

"No mischief," she said, "and no good resolutions, I don't believe in binding the future But I feel like the New Year!"

"In May?"

"If you kiss my hand, I'll sing to you" She stretched out her hand "Now come close I'll sing in your ear

broadened into a smile As though no one was staring at him, he reached for Plence's hand and shook it warmly

'Bon soir, monsieur Enchanté de vous revoir"

At this moment he saw Therese. His face lighted, but he moved towards her without haste, a little bow to right and left asking first that his interruption might be pardoned Then he took her hand, drew up a chair between her and Schnetz As he did so, he saw Cugnot, leaned over the table again and shook his hand as he had shaken Plence's, then sat down, unembarrassed and unruffled, taking stock of those around him

"I am sorry, Therèse, not to have come to your theatre I found your note but I had an evening appointment with a merchant from Bercy—rather important as he is leaving Paris to-morrow morning He was surprised, I can tell you, to find flowers in my room. Such beautiful flowers too Thank you, Therese. And Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz asked me to convey her thanks—and her apologies for not having known who you were'

"And who is it that doesn't know Therese Despreux?" Quérignon interjected

"A friend of mine,' Barbet answered "You see, she works in my hotel She seldom comes out—but there's a great deal she does know I assure you" He turned again to Therese. "My visitor stayed I came late to the theatre. You had already gone. But they told me you were often to be found at Maubant's."

A waiter asked him what he would drink

Thank you he said "I am not thirsty," but, when Schnetz poured him out a glass of champagne, he raised it politely and drank a mouthful Thérese went through a form of introducing him, casually waving her hand and murmuring a name here and there. Carefully observant, he bowed courteously to each His eyes were clear, his hands on the table-cloth had the cool brown of long exposure to weather and he held his body erect and at ease.

"I hope I haven't interrupted an interesting conversation," he said. Everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves"

The interesting conversation was resumed The wind was out of Quérignon's oration and he started on a new tack. But his invention

Thérèse a royal mistress as soon as the Bourbons could be restored and whose attitude towards life was, in all other things, at once as solemn and as frivolous, were debating with Plence, who had thrown the subject across the table as a handful of coins to be scrambled for, the value of continence and its opposite as an incentive to endeavour The coins bounced, the company fell upon them History, scandal, reminiscence were called in evidence Plence recited an elaborately detailed form book of the Écurie in which his leading performers were considered in the language of Auteuil, Querignon's reigning mistress, Suzanne Druat, contributed an aphorism on convents, Querignon himself drew his cuffs down over his long, thin wrists, took a deep breath and began an oration by Bossuet on the death of Therese Despreux As his eloquence approached its climax, he rose in his place, stretched out his arms and was about to address all Maubant's on the perils of chastity when old Schnetz leaned across the table to pull him down, lost his feet, floundered and could not return There he lay among the fruit and glasses, rolling on his belly, vainly slapping the table cloth with hands too weak to raise him. Querignon instantly leapt on to a sofa and, supporting himself on one foot, put the other neatly on Schnetz's shoulder You see before you," he cried one whom virtue has brought low, and on whom this epitaph shall be written For him a bed was a place of pilgrimage and a supper table his grave For him—'

His sentence was broken by a roar of laughter Thérèse removed his foot and rescued his victim Poor Schnetz was so near to crying that she kissed him, his gallantry responded, he began to laugh breathlessly, then stopped 'Good God, look at Plence!' he cried

Plence was standing in his place his arm raised, his forefinger extended

"Behold," he said, "the man who came out of the mirror!"

Those whose backs were to the door turned in their chairs All Thérèse's company, and indeed the whole company of Maubant's gazed at the man who now stood, hat in hand, momentarily dazzled by the blaze of light He stood firmly moving neither hand nor foot, and turned his head He was neatly dressed in grey trousers and a square-cut jacket buttoned high At recognition of Plence his mouth

broadened into a smile As though no one was staring at him, he reached for Plence's hand and shook it warmly

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failed, he lost the table, and at the farther end of it, a thin man like a white ferret raised his head to say that he knew a woman who went three times a year to Pere-Lachaise where she laid flowers on the tomb of Abélard and Héloïse because she regarded it as a monument to disappointed love

"Héloïse and Abélard, my dear friend," Schnetz cried, eager to dispute which of the two should be given precedence, but the discussion swept past him, the old story was embellished, as an example of chastity enforced, with modern instances from the drawing room and the coulisses, the Church was criticized, the virtue of Héloïse suspected, her competence examined, her love doubted, and Abélard was considered as a schoolmaster, a prig, a fool, a coward, a hero, a hypocrite—all this in a gay, cruel dialogue that ran from tongue to tongue like flame over dry sticks until the whole table crackled with the lies of wit Therèse, taking her part in it, accepting each challenge as it came, parrying it, turning it to her profit, became aware that Cugnot had contributed nothing and was not listening to her He was watching Barbet, she also turned to look at him, as she did so Quérignon said with malice, so that the provincial who had interrupted his oration should be embarrassed and befooled "But you, sir, have said nothing!" A silence fell, Suzanne Druat began to titter, Schnetz rolled his eyes "What would you say," Quérignon persisted, "—that chastity is productive or barren? And if it is not voluntary but enforced—what then? What do you say of Abelard and Heloïse?"

"Only that they were happy and that they suffered," Barbet answered

"No more than that?"

"And that they were brave," Barbet said, as though he were answering questions in school

"But all that is obvious," cried Quérignon "You needn't be so cautious, my friend You may speak openly We swear to keep your secret Come, they are safely dead"

"Oh no," said Barbet, "for a long time they have been standing behind your chair"

Quérignon's shoulders twitched, he cast a swift, fluttering glance

down the table as though to beg from his own kind the support of their ridicule, then, throwing up his head, let out a solitary and shrill laugh like a cry, and gulped and was silent

Barbet was astonished His words had sprung naturally from the impression, which had gathered in his mind while the others were talking that they considered Héloïse and Abélard to be divided from themselves by impassable barriers of time and individuality—barriers that for him had no existence, and what he had said was not a reproof to them but a spontaneous expression of his own feeling, a short cut to his long silence But having alarmed Quérignon, he at once did what he could to put him in countenance again

Do not misunderstand me," he said "I did not mean that I had seen their ghosts—only that while you were speaking—while you were all speaking and I was listening—I thought that, when they were in Paris, we were less real to them than they are to us, and that nevertheless— But there, I feel that I have upset Monsieur de Quérignon by what I said"

"Not at all not at all, said old Schnetz, "I'd have said it myself if I'd thought of it"

What precisely he meant by this remark no one knew, but everyone felt that there was something absurd and childlike in it Schnetz found himself being laughed at without hostility and was as pleased as a boy when the world encourages him Now what *did* you mean? he was asked and replied with a seriousness which, as he was a little drunk, set them laughing again "Really, bless me, I'm not sure that I know But the world *grows* over one like a crust The English have a rhyme about blackbirds who were shut in a pie under a crust of pastry And *then* you know, there comes a moment when the crust breaks and the birds begin to sing!"

The tension was slackened and Quérignon given time to recover his poise He looked at *Barbet* without resentment but with curiosity and said "I *understand* Yes, I understand very well But you also *must* understand *something* we talk for the sake of talking While I talk, there is always something quite different going on in my mind For *example*, if I were to tell the truth I should confess that ever since I first *read the* letters of Héloïse—ever since then I

to sing" He touched Barbet on the arm and continued "You know, my dear friend, it was you who broke the crust Can you tell us why blackbirds sing?

'Certainly," Barbet answered obligingly "That is my own subject. Certainly I can tell you why birds sing" Then he smiled a wide, easy smile. 'But I won't begin at this *time of night*"

Schnetz nodded with sleepy affability Except Thérèse's table, Maubant's was empty

"Thérèse, my dear, we have said so many foolish things to-night And the cock is crowing Sing us a song to make us forget them"

Often she had sung to them [illegible] Now she [illegible] have been given your cue!"

She did not understand smiled shook her head He whispered soundlessly, making with his mouth words for her to read

"Ah yes! Ah yes!" she exclaimed. "But that is Barbet's own song!" And she turned to him.

"What song Thérèse?"

She put her lips to his ear, then asked "May I sing that?"

'But certainly"

"Here? Now?"

Schnetz came suddenly to life. "Is your name Barbet, sir?"

"Yes, said Barbet.

"Bless me,' said Schnetz, "and it is to you we owe her songs. Barbet this and Barbet that! Barbet at the races. Barbet at the Elysée. Barbet at the Salon Barbet in the Chamber Barbet in the country And we thought you were a stranger My dear sir, you are as famous as the Eiffel tower"

"But less conspicuous,' said Barbet.

Schnetz struggled for the bottle, splashed champagne from glass to glass then forgot the toast he had intended

'Sing Thérèse,' Cugnot said

Thérèse straightened herself and laid her fingers on the table's edge. She sang to Barbet's own tune as Fontan had written it down.

"I said a stupid thing I wish I could unsay it. But you alone can

have felt that she and I—no, let me finish, Suzanne, let me finish—that she and I had a secret in common *I mean,"* he continued with an unarmoured simplicity that Thérèse had never before known in him, "that the book became more than a book to me. I used to turn back to her letters as if they were my own and I used to judge others by their appreciation of them And every word I have said against her to-night—" He looked round as though seeking refuge from the necessity to say what he was about to say Then his eyes returned to Barbet's and he continued "Every word was a denial of—of—I heard myself speaking them you know—a denial of—not of her, but of myself"

"And then, bless me, the cock crew three times!" said Schnetz. "It is always crowing, that's the devil of it Now if you could tell us, Monsieur Hazard, how to wring the neck of that cock, you'd make life a deal easier"

Thérèse had been content to be silent She had been watching the faces of those before her, and feeling the presence of Barbet at her side Conversation had become eager again, but its temper was changed The white ferret was describing a great disused granary among the outbuildings of the country house in which he had been brought up—a room, he said, that had seemed to him as large as a cathedral "I used to creep out of the house at night and creep back in the morning before anyone was awake There was no adventure to compare with sleeping among the straw My father sold the house and when I went back there the granary had been pulled down and something else had been built in its place" "What had been built *in its place?"* Plence asked *"That is what is so extraordinary*, I can't remember what had been built in its place I can see myself standing there and deciding precisely where the granary had been and thinking, if only the place had been left vacant it would be better But I can't remember the new building" "You could go and look," said Plence "Oh no, oh no, I shall not go there again It makes the cock crow, my dear Plence" And this tale of the granary was capped by other tales of times past which revealed the tellers to themselves as they had forgotten that they were Old Schnetz cocked his eye at Thérèse and said "When the pie was opened the birds began

"I promised Pierre."

She listened to the small, clipped phrases. This is Barbet, she thought. This all we say. Soon I shall be alone in my flat, we shall have said good night and he will be driving on to the Hôtel Bagnolet. But she began to smile in the darkness, for the phrases pleased her by their plainness and brevity

"Four whole days," he said, "five perhaps."

"But one night nearly gone."

He came near, wishing to kiss her Because the cab was rocking, he had first to steady her face between his hands, and she smiled at his unpractised care and delighted in it. "We don't have to count hours, Therese."

"You make me feel that's true," she answered "That's why I love you"

They were crossing a bridge and, in reply to Barbet's question, she said "He's taking us by the Île de la Cité We are very near Look—look up through the little window at his side!" But the cab turned left into the Quai aux Fleurs, houses shut out the towers of the cathedral and the high stars, in a moment, they had crossed another bridge—her own bridge, Therese said, the Pont St. Louis —and were drawn up at the corner where the Quai d'Orléans sloped up to Therese's door

"Different from the Rue Lilas," he said, looking up from the pavement.

"Less than you think."

"You were hungry then Thérèse It was like a fairy tale to watch you eat food and to take you out on the river and lie about on the grass at St Cloud and now—"

"Barbet dear I can't be permanently hungry—though it's almost true that I am."

He hesitated still "I want to go on steamboats," he said "I want to go to Mantes and find the Gabrielle d'Estrées. She still starts at the same time"

"Did you find that out this afternoon?"

"Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz did"

"Bless her," said Thérèse. "I love routine" She began to laugh

talked at ease, their intimacy being the closer because it was of the kind that no one, considering them in their separate lives, could suspect Even Courcelet wondered at it. After his first meeting with Barbet, he said to Thérèse "It is even odder than I had believed I had thought that to you he was a kind of toy, a pet animal, a pet sentiment—what you will, but that man is no one's pet animal I suppose I am as near to being a complete materialist as any intelligent man can be and you are as near to being a complete egocentric as any intelligent woman can be, and in both respects he is at the opposite pole, and yet I like him and you love him, and he loves you, Therese. He talked to me of you There again I was wrong I had expected a virtuous provincial rescuing you from perdition But not at all He isn't aware of your perdition"

"Oh yes," she said, 'he is."

"He appears not to mind"

'Oh yes," she repeated, 'he does"

Courcelet spread out his hands to protest against these interruptions. "At any rate," he said, "he doesn't condemn you and he isn't jealous of you And he isn't resigned and, above all, he's not indifferent. That's what fascinates me. A tolerance that fails to distinguish between one way of living and another is only a form of laziness It's not a virtue of the soul but a vice of the intellect—and one that I indulge in But to see a distinction and to see through it, to see that I am an old dandy who wastes his life and that you—well, my dear Thérèse, you shall write your own label—to read the label, and understand it as he does, and not to stop there but to say 'No I can see through the label I can see through the bottle. I know that the wine—' And the odd thing is," Courcelet continued after a pause, "that in fact he *says* nothing of the sort He has no theories Most of what he told me about you was told in the process of saying that he was going to take you down the river Again I had thought this little provincial imagines that he's taking a girl from his village inn out for a treat. But not at all He's fully aware of who you are and what you are. He's by no means an ingenuous fool And then, do you know, Thérèse, I took upon myself the delicious rôle of a father of a family I asked him what his intentions were"

at herself, because only in his company did she observe her own contradictions "I hope the time of the train hasn't changed What time is it from St Lazare?"

"Ten thirty-one"

"I shall remember"

"And not be late?"

"I meant. I shall always remember"

"I was afraid—"

"Of what, Barbet?"

"That you might not want to come"

"With you?"

"Dearest Thérese!" he said gratefully "But the Gare St Lazare at ten in the morning and the Gabrielle d Estrées You are a famous star, Thérèse You aren t a hungry rascal any more"

"I am," she said, and took his arm "Don't say good bye yet You are quite near home—over the next bridge and you're at the end of the Boulevard St Germain Come to the edge of the river Oh, Barbet, I'm happy We are planning what we are *going* to do It's still ahead Shall we go to La Roche Guyon? When shall we go?"

"Sunday? Monday?"

"Both" Then she added 'I was doing something on Monday What on earth was it? I know I was burying Victor Hugo Philippe has a window in the Rue Soufflot"

"Sunday then"

She nodded 'When we come back we can dine in peace I have no performance It would be no good anyway The whole of Paris will be at the Arc de Triomphe for the lying in state And no performance on Monday'

"Are you dining with Monsieur de Courcelet after the funeral?'

"I was I m not But Sunday,' she added "that's far away Look!" She turned him round so that his back was to the river "At the corner just beside my outer door, do you see—a restaurant? To-morrow? Noon?

Next day and on Saturday when they met briefly in the intervals of their work, the strangeness of their separation was gone They

Chapter 11

"DO YOU REMEMBER OUR LAST JOURNEY TO Mantes?" Thérèse asked as their train moved into open country.

"I remember that you were nearly late and that you had violet tops to your boots."

Glad that he remembered, or chose to recall, no more of that bitter journey, she was content to allow the country to slide past, but at Mantes she tested his memory again. "This time," she said, "I have a parasol."

"Good," he answered. "It will be hot. But we can go leisurely. There's plenty of time between the train and the boat."

They loitered through the streets of Mantes. At the landing stage there was still time to waste; two intending passengers were sitting placidly under the awning of the Gabrielle d'Estrées, but there was no other sign of life in her except a twist of smoke rising into the windless air, and they seated themselves at a rickety table, nursing glasses of coffee on their knees. Henri, the skipper, was at a table near by, turning over a bundle of papers and checking them by a list.

"Bon jour, majesté," said Thérèse, and in a moment he was on his feet, remembering them, welcoming them, asking if they had again seen his friend at St. Cloud who first had taught them to call him Henri Quatre. He had told them more than that, Thérèse replied. He had told them that Henri Quatre would allow her to work the engine room telegraph.

"And so you shall, mademoiselle, but not going out of harbour. How far do you go? La Roche? Good, you shall work the telegraph as we approach La Roche."

As the steamer drew away from the landing stage, Thérèse was

when they came close to shore, he must take the telegraph himself, but, so prompt was she in obeying the orders he gave in mid-stream to test her, that he let her be, and, when the Gabrielle d'Estrées was safely alongside, he patted her shoulder and said "A seaman, mademoiselle!"

"Oh no," she answered, "just an actress. There's no part I can't play if I give my mind to it," and, as she went ashore with Barbet, she pointed out to him with pride how clever she had been, as if Henri Quatre were Plence and had praised her performance on the stage.

"You see," Barbet said, "nothing is changed. I remember, when we were here before, you said we were here for the *first time*, and there is the tree with the initials carved on it!"

"And this," she replied, "isn't the last time. Barbet, let's make sure of it! Make up our minds now that we will come here to-morrow."

"Yes," he said, "but how you cling to time, Thérèse! How you divide it into days and hours!"

"I cling to happy things. I treasure and hoard them."

Their plan was to eat at La Roche and to spend the day there as they had done before, but first they strolled back to the landing stage and leaned against the parapet of the bridge, looking down at the Gabrielle d'Estrées. They would wave to Henri Quatre as he set out down-river. The hours lay ahead of them; it was pleasant to be idle with the warm, rough stone of the bridge under their hands.

"Thérèse!"

"What?"

"Look, she's casting off. Let's go on in her." Without waiting for answer he hailed the skipper. "Wait! we are coming with you." They made haste over the track to the waterside and over the tufted grass. The gangway was held for them.

"But you told me," Henri Quatre called from the bridge as though they had accused him of having marooned them, "you told me that you were for La Roche."

"You are quite right," Barbet answered, a little breathless and

visited by the desire which struck her always in Barbet's company—never to come back, the same fantastic desire, sprung seemingly from a part of her nature ordinarily asleep, which, two years ago, when they had watched swallows and starlings among the reeds of the Charente, had prompted her to beg that they might not return, that she might postpone, even by half an hour, the parting from him which would be a re-entry to her normal life Now she reproved herself for idle romanticism which, if she gave rein to it, would make her sad and poor company for him and to give him pleasure she said "Do you want to play piquet? Have you brought cards with you?"

He clapped his hand to his pocket "How stupid! How stupid of me! Now we shall be all day without them, unless we are able to buy a couple of packs at La Roche But even that will not be the same"

"I have brought some,' she said "Clever Thérèse!"

He smiled and held out his hand

"Say 'Clever Thérèse!'"

He repeated the words obediently and, taking the cards, began to shuffle them

The game was a delight to them not for its own sake only but because it was a ritual shared, nevertheless they did not prolong it, the sun, the air, the excitement of each stopping place, the monotonous placidity of the water moving astern when the froth of their paddles was out of it, the stump-stump of the feet of Henri Quatre on the bridge overhead—all these were things to savour, almost to touch as Therese touched the rail of the bridge ladder with her bare hand for the joy of feeling the sun s heat come to her from the sparkling brass I will remember! I will remember! she said to herself, and would have asked him if he also would remember but forbore If he was living in the present, let him so live These were their minutes together She would not count them for him

As they came near to La Roche, Henri Quatre remembered his promise His head looked down from the ladder and he called her to the bridge. There, at once she was intent to obey, determined to surprise him by her competence He began by warning her that

lived near at hand and at this hour was always prepared for what visitors he might send, but if they went elsewhere—well, he would not be responsible. The wait at Vernon was not a long one, the Gabrielle d Estrees must make the locks in time and be at Mantes before nightfall

When they landed at Vernon, even Thérèse was not hungry After the hours spent in the boat, she wished to walk, and they wandered idly through the town until they came upon a great avenue of poplars that led them back to the river not far above the bridge Here was a stretch of grass, the little park of the town, with a few shaded benches where women sat with their sewing while children played near by Thérèse and Barbet walked down to the water's edge and there lay on the sloping bank to watch three boys chase one another in the water and come out gasping to dry themselves in the sun

They talked desultorily and at ease, not caring to choose or to press any subject, not observing silence when it fell—happy in the release of being together and alone. One of their silences was broken by Barbet s saying

Do you remember Blachère?"

"That night when I sang in the prison—I remember him then"

'He is the most intelligent of them all Once I thought he was stupid Then he found out my weaknesses, and now—"

What are your weaknesses, Barbet?"

Well he said for example, if someone persuades me that I'm afraid to do something I always want to do it to prove—perhaps to prove him wrong—more likely, to prove to myself that I'm not afraid

Is that a weakness?"

Isn't it? A thing doesn t become right because I'm afraid of it"

She considered that, running her fingers through the grass "And Blachère? she said What has he told you that you are afraid to do?"

Get rid of the prisoners.'

"Are you?"

Oh Thérèse' he said, I wish I could see that clearly I feel as if I d been puzzling over a sum for years and had become so muddled

holding up his hand as a signal of goodwill "I am sorry. It is we who have changed our minds"

"I didn't, you know," Therèse said "Mine was changed for me. If I hadn't followed you at once, you would have been here now and I should still have been on that hot stone bridge Now that I have my breath again, I shall stand up and wave to *me* on the bridge." She rose and waved "Au revoir, Thérèse! Au revoir, La Rochefoucauld! We shall come back! Now," she said, "let's eat and drink There's food on board; I have smelt it But first we will sit here—no, *here*, in the sun, and drink a glass of wine"

He brought her wine

"I'm sorry for La Roche Guyon," she said, "—not to have us this afternoon But she will wait We will tell her about it when we come back Where are we going, Barbet?"

"I haven't an idea," he said "We can get off when we want to"

The small, tumpy hills by which they were passing had the glaze of the sun on their rounded slopes, a glaze broken only by blue shadows, curved on the curving earth, and, near Tripleval, by white cliffs sliced out of the hillsides with an easy knife In contrast with the cliffs' whiteness, *everything green threw up the yellow* that was in it Even in the hot stillness, the trees shone with blue and gold, glistening above their reflections which the passing of the Gabrielle d'Estrées disturbed, and as the afternoon went on and breezes began to stir, turning the poplar leaves, making all shadow and all light quiver, the yellow in the landscape deepened, the great barges themselves—Ventoux, Phébus, Paul Dermoz—running a sparkle of gold from their decks as they went by At the locks the Gabrielle d'Estrées was given precedence, between them she was proud of her speed, but there was delay at the lock of Port-Villez Barbet and Therese were drawn to the little village which they saw beyond the railway line and were in doubt whether to disembark there, but Henri Quatre would not let them go Now that they were so near, they must come to Vernon, he said "At Vernon one eats well but at Villez—no" He would show them where to eat, if they went where he directed them—to the inn belonging to his sister-in-law, they would have time enough to eat comfortably before the return journey began, for she

"I didn't say 'hand them over.' I said 'let them go.'"

But Barbet's mind had sheered away. Though he had heard what she said, he had not received her idea. She was about to repeat it, to force it on him, but checked herself, remembering that, when she was rehearsing, people who thrust ideas upon her before she was ready for them did more harm than good. "But I haven't *come* to that yet!" she would say, and now, unpersisting because she loved him, she stretched her body on the ground and smelt the grass and turned over to spread out her arms and gaze at the sky.

"You will know what to do," she said, "when you are ready *to* do it."

She sat up, her arms clasped about her knees, and he beside her. Beyond the bridge heavy smoke rose against the woods of the opposite hill, the nose and the barred S of the Gabrielle d'Estrées appeared through one of the arches. Her lowered funnel swung into position again as she came upstream.

"There is Henri Quatre," said Thérèse; "do you think he will be angry with us because we didn't go to his sister-in-law's?"

She would have sprung up to wave to him.

"Don't wave," said Barbet, "he might stop for us."

They watched in silence until the Gabrielle d'Estrées had passed out of sight. By this time the swimmers had dressed and gone, the water's surface was unbroken.

Their return was made not through the avenue and the town but along the river's bank. When they left the open ground in which they had been sitting, their way narrowed, passing between a walled garden and a low parapet of stone on which men and girls were sitting in pairs, discreetly spaced, then broadened into a road, flanked on one side by houses, on the other by a broad, grassy bank, wooded at first but soon becoming open ground studded with bol- [illegible] of the town, and here, included in the curve, were the hotel and courtyard of the *Trois Couronnes*. Looking out over the river was a balcony on which tables were set.

by it that—" He smiled at her "I would push it at you and say 'Do that one for me, please,' but it happens to be a *sum that* one can *do only* for oneself You see, it doesn't become *right* to get rid of the *prisoners* because Blachère *tells* me *I'm afraid* of it."

"It *doesn't become wrong* "

Barbet turned over on his back, supporting his head with fingers interlaced so that he might continue to watch the river

"Blachère can have no interest in the thing, one way or the other," he said "Whether I rid myself of my prison or not, he will remain a prisoner until his time's up And yet he goes on and on, tempting me to be rid of them "

"I think *I know why*," Therese answered "*I know about devils.* *He tempts you because he knows that you will resist the temptation The more he presses you, the more you will resist—the more you will say 'I mustn't do this because I should be doing it to prove that I'm not afraid'* And so you'll keep your prison, and *Blachère* will have you imprisoned with him That is all "

Barbet did not answer at once After a little [illegible] see, more hangs to it than [illegible] or not It's like a gate [illegible] *Do you understand?*"

"What happens the other side of the gate?"

"*I should* have ceased to be the master of anyone whose labour I don't share I should have ceased to use force *I shouldn't* any longer be kind and patronizing as people are who go and *work among* the poor To help people isn't enough To teach *prisoners how* to *make barrels* isn't *much good of itself It leaves you* separate *from* them and that's a kind of death If a bird perches on my *hand* and I feel 'Here's a bird perching on my hand,' then I am separated *from him* and all the *feeding and stroking in the world makes* no odds, but *if* at that moment I *feel also* Here's a hand for me to perch on, then—"

"Then why *don't* you *let the prisoners go* Barbet? What stops you?"

"Hand them over to another *prison*? Tell my *own conscience* to go to sleep and be *comfortable*? *Like a man who* feels that to own property is wrong and makes *it over to his wife*?"

such a performance, such spirit, such invention—an I be a playgoer of fifty years' standing ' In Vernon they laugh at me They say I am too old for playgoing They say it is a waste of time and money—and it does cost money if you add the train fare! But my old mother understands. I was born in Paris, mademoiselle It was she took me first when I was a boy, and until a few years ago she and I—off we used to go together Now, even she is too old"

"Then she has never seen me?"

"Alas no mademoiselle! But if mademoiselle will allow it, I should like to let her into the secret—I mean the secret that Thérèse Despreux is dining with us to-night? I have spoken of you to her so often! It would give her such pleasure!'

'But why not? Therese answered "It isn't so deep a secret But thank you monsieur for your discretion It is only that people stare and news spreads Once, in a little restaurant very like this, when people found out, they began to sing my own songs and clapped their hands and asked me to sing to them And then it may do harm if you refuse. They say that you are too proud, that you are ungenerous.'

Monsieur Jugiaud had stopped on a half landing outside the door to which he was conducting Thérèse.

'There, mademoiselle you will find, I think, everything you need

When she came out, she found that he had gone up three or four stairs and waited for her I thought that mademoiselle might care to see— and he went forward, assuming that she wo [illegible] him At the [illegible]

[illegible] all this

roo

It was not large, but a sloping roof and a wall curving down a pair of steps to a second door at its farther end gave it a rambling character of its own In the window boxes geraniums had been planted out Though a bed and a dressing table occupied the greater part of the room, there was space for a sofa and a small armchair of red plush beside the broad, low windows Kneeling on the sofa, Therèse looked out at the barges, at the wooded island beyond, and,

Barbet and Thérèse rounded the building, for the entrance to it was from the main street They found themselves in a dining-room which contained eight tables and was decorated with painted mirrors and artificial flowers Two of the tables were occupied by family parties, at a third a woman in black, with a child beside her, was playing cards with an ancient and benign witch whose white head was draped in a black, woollen shawl On the right, between a varnished staircase and a zinc bar dressed with a regiment of bottles, was a high, enclosed desk, like a pulpit, from which a stout man, with spectacles thrust up on his forehead and a blue cap on his head, gazed at the new-comers Their entrance had set a bell jangling and all heads were turned A baby belonging to one of the family parties climbed on to the seat of his chair that he might have an uninterrupted view of the proceedings

On one of the mirrors, painted among festoons of roses, was the name "A Jugiaud," and, when Barbet had said good day and the man at the desk had said good evening, Thérèse said "Monsieur Jugiaud?" a little interrogatively but with that implied recognition in her tone which, she knew, melted the ice of masculine vanity

Monsieur Jugiaud bowed It was, he admitted, his name Then he lowered his spectacles on to his nose and examined Thérèse more closely "Come, come," he said, "unless I am mistaken—"

Thérèse shut her eyes tight, frowned a little, protruded her lips, then opened her eyes and smiled It was a signal that Monsieur Jugiaud understood, the lady did not wish to be recognized, he was silent and momentarily disappointed Then he rubbed his cheek and entered into the conspiracy "Bon" he said "Parfait" and, turning to Barbet, he began to discuss with him the problem of dinner He came down from his stool and out of his pulpit, the three of them sat down together at an empty table to drink an apéritif while the mullet was being prepared, and when Thérèse said she would like to wash and his old mother, clasping her shawl under her chin, moved to accompany her, he waved her aside, begging her not to disturb herself, and himself led the way upstairs As soon as a turn of the stairs hid them, he seized Thérèse's hand and shook it again and again Thérèse Despreux! Thérèse Despreux! Never had he seen

stead of taking the Gabrielle d'Estrées, we could hire one of them and be out in her all day"

Thérese hesitated Should she tell him now that they could not return to Paris tonight? She felt that it would trouble him, that he would hold himself responsible, that his pleasure would be spoiled, and she said only

"If there's wind enough, we could sail"

"A whole day," said Barbet. 'Then we would come back and dine here, on this balcony Therese?'

"Yes, Barbet."

'This, too, is a first time, not a last?'

'Why should you doubt it?'

'I don t doubt it," he answered. "But I have to be *careful* You see, there s one thing in which I know I'm unusual—*my surroundings* make very little difference to me Seeing what a countryman I am, you might think that Paris would get on my nerves or that I shouldn t be able to sleep or that something would go wrong, but it is not so I seem not to have any nerves. I'm healthy anywhere and I sleep like a top And it's the same about coming to a place like this. Maubant s and the Trois Couronnes are all the same to me. But to you—'

"Do you mean, she said, "that you think this isn't grand enough for me Now, listen—"

'*No*, no ' he interrupted, 'I don't in the least mean that. I know that you are happy—well, because we are together, because it's a change from Paris and the paper flowers and the painted mirrors and old Jugaud have a taste of their own But everyone has his own way of living You have yours. And this—though it may be a change—doesn t fit into it. Nor do I, for that matter"

"But, *Barbet*, the whole basis of your life is that human beings are not separate, that you aren t separate from the birds or the vines or your prisoners or from anything in Nature. Why should you feel separated from me? Or is it that you think I feel separated *from* you?"

His eyes held her [illegible]
muddle myself into [illegible]

to her left, at the great curve of the Seine where it swept on towards Rouen

"The Gabrielle d'Estrées left early this evening?" she suggested, turning her head to look at Monsieur Jugiaud

"Early? I think not, mademoiselle At about the same time as usual Indeed, we say always that we could set our clocks by her whistle"

"Anyhow, we missed her"

"That, if I may say so, has been my good fortune, mademoiselle"

"But how do we get back?"

"Back?"

"To Mantes To Paris"

He gazed at her, evidently doubting her intention "There is a train in twenty minutes time"

"I mean after dinner"

He shook his head knowingly and rubbed his hands together "There is no other train until four in the morning mademoiselle"

"Mon Dieu," said Therèse, 'then we shall have to stay with you to-night"

Monsieur Jugiaud did his utmost to appear astonished In the circumstances did the room please mademoiselle? Therèse surveyed it with new eyes and praised the window boxes It was, she said, a beautiful room then added in a voice of alarm that Monsieur Jugiaud, as an appreciator of good acting discreetly admired "But I must discuss it with monsieur And in any case we should want two rooms"

"Entendu, madame And now I think that if madame would give herself the trouble to go downstairs, she would find the mullet awaiting her.'

Barbet was already on the balcony They sat down to their meal together, and Monsieur Jugiaud after a little discourse on the cooking of mullet, poured out for them an open white wine from a carafe

"Look, Therese," Barbet said turning in his chair and pointing over the rail of the balcony 'Down there below the barges—do you see those boats? To-morrow if we came straight here by train in-

"Was it a good smile?"

"I have seen happier"

She wanted to say to him: Barbet, let's be plain with each other. Let us be sure that, if ever we go to bed together, we don't do it out of politeness to each other But at the thought of herself saying these words she burst out laughing, then suddenly was silent, afraid that he might think that she was laughing at him. Monsieur Jugiaud was coaxing the cork from a bottle of Haut Brion

"There, madame," he said, carefully wiping the lip of the bottle, "when red wine comes with laughter there seem to be no problems any more."

"'Seem,'" Thérèse answered, "that's an ominous word! Is that a proverb?"

"No, mademoiselle No, madame It is only a little saying of mine. Or, rather, of my father in-law's. You will find that we have it printed on the wine-list I will show you"

As he was going away, Barbet exclaimed "Bless my soul, I had forgotten to ask. What time is there a train for Paris?"

'Don't worry," said Thérèse swiftly, 'I have asked about that"

From behind Barbet's back, Monsieur Jugiaud threw towards her a glance which said that in all things, to the end of his life, he was on the side of Therese Despreux. To prove it, he vanished Barbet pulled out his watch

Oh dear" he said, "I should have liked to have time to loiter over coffee. I remember, during my military service, on the last evening of leave I used to think suppose a miracle were to happen now, suppose a message were to come or I found that I had miscounted the days—anyhow that I didn't have to go back to-night! How long have we, Therèse? Time for coffee? When is the train?"

"The miracle *has* happened," she said "There is no train"

'Do you mean we needn't go!"

'I thought it would worry you, Barbet."

'I suppose it ought. Isn't it strange?" he said. "Here have I been assuming quite steadily that we must go back to Paris to-night When he brings coffee, I thought, the evening will be over Still, I said to myself, not quite over—there'll be the train, and I had made a plan

same with the birds or the vines or with you, Thérèse Men are not equal Certainly they are not the same It is—it is far back—far back behind our lives here—that the unity exists. Only there Here you are—a famous, brilliant girl and around you there is a glitter of—"

She waited, but he did not continue He picked up his knife and fork *'I am talking too much,'* he said *'We must enjoy our dinner"*

'And around me' she persisted there is a glitter of—of what?"

'Of being courted Of being desired

'And spoiled?

'*Not for me Not if I remember who I* am and what *I am* and what you and I really mean to each other, and am not such a fool as to play—or want to play—other men's parts

Thérèse pressed the discussion no further but turned it to subjects that did not disturb or trouble him Never before had she cared deeply for the peace of any man's mind If by giving or denying if by any vanity of her power she were to torment him whom she loved selflessly as she had loved none other in her life her anchor would be gone and she summoned all her strength that she might be to him as in his deep heart he needed her to be

That he desired her she knew His desire was communicated in her own Since while we talk of other things she said to herself and are divided by the width of this table the evening air is yet a mutual touch between us *shall not our hands touch also?* Since in this way we desire each other though without the pain without the wild avarice of extreme desire shall he and I hold back? But she feared that if he came to her it might be with misgiving He thought of her as belonging except in the special relationship that already existed between them to a world not his in which as he had said she was "courted" and desired If he came to her would it be in part because he felt that she expected him in that sense to court and desire her? And if I come to *him* she asked *herself suddenly* will it be, in part, because I am saying to myself that what others have had, I will not deny to him?

"What are you smiling at, Thérèse?"

not to return to Paris had given him release, was able to admit Thérese to his mind more fully than ever in the past He did so by telling her stories of her own childhood and his, of her father, of the country's battle against the phylloxera, and through them all appeared the tranquillity and the zeal of his own life.

"Does fame never tempt you, Barbet?"

"If it came, I suppose I should learn how to live in spite of it; but I would rather be without How can a man who is very famous help feeling 'I and the others The others and I'? You must feel it yourself, Thérese."

"Yes."

"And you want to feel that?"

'Should I fight for it if I didn't?"

"That," he said, 'isn't an answer Do you *want* to feel separated?"

"Yes, yes, I do," she replied "I see life as a battle I want to feel that I have won it I was everyone's drudge when I was a child 'That girl, Thérese Despreux, will never come to any good!' I didn't believe them I *liked* Thérese Despreux. And I still want to prove to them that I was right and they were wrong That's all there is to it.

If I were you, I should use all my brains so that I might be the *one man* who had overcome the phylloxera Then I should teach others how to overcome it, and they would all say 'Clever Thérèse!' I should tell the newspapers. I should come to Paris and—"

Barbet leaned back in his chair and laughed "Your father said to me once that, when you were a little girl, you used to tell him how you would have behaved if you had been Mary Magdalene"

"That was natural enough. That was because I am always playing parts,' she exclaimed "I *can't help it.* Is it wrong? Is it wrong, do you think, to be an actress at all?"

"No," he answered, 'but some employments are better than others —they make it less difficult to live well One might think the job of a soldier would make it difficult, but I found that wasn't true—anyhow," he added with a grin, "not if you are a Frenchman as well. You do what you are told, but you don't make gods of your officers or cease to have a life of your own However keen you are as a soldier, you are still a vine-grower at heart Soldiering has a motive while it

—we were to drive a long way in Paris and sit on a pavement and drink cognac before we parted And now—Thérèse, the evening is beginning It is scarcely half-past eight "

Their table was lighted only through the window of the dining-room from which a wide beam fell across the balcony As they continued their dish and drank their Haut Brion, the ancient witch, Madame Jugiaud, came out with two candlesticks While she was fumbling for matches in the pocket of her apron, Barbet produced a box

With the authority of age, she laid her fingers on his wrist "No, no, monsieur Allow me My son has told me his secret It will give me pleasure to light a pair of candles for Therese Despreux "

When it was done, Therese took her hand and kissed it "Thank you, madame They burn brighter because you lighted them "

Madame Jugiaud looked at her hand and with the other covered the place that Thérèse had kissed "That will be something to remember," she whispered, "when I am old "

After she had gone, Therese said "That was friendly That was kind "

"Don t you expect people to be friendly and kind?"

"I'm glad when they are Barbet, why did she say that? Why did she say 'when I am old'?"

"Sometimes," he said, "just for a moment, my mother, too, thinks that she is young again "

At first they had little need of candles, but the river was becoming luminous among the meadows, and above the opposite hill, between north and east, the sky, empty now of the mirrored sunset, had that transparency of water, that low gleam of pearl over which darkness at last suddenly flows in On the ridge of the forest, against this sky, a detached group of trees stood out the gleam appearing between their trunks and between their branches Thérèse made Barbet look at them with her "They are like—" but she wished not to liken them to anything, but to see them as they were, in their own form and endurance

When their coffee was brought, darkness had built walls about their candles, and Barbet, as though the knowledge that they were

"That is how I should like it to be," he answered

'But it is not?'

'Not now Not all the time."

She asked 'Is it Blachère?'

After a long silence he said "I ought to *know* what to do To keep the prison or to give it up Instead, I argue I listen to Blachère. I try not to dislike or fear him And I fail I argue It ought to be as simple as a man's opening his eyes"

'Barbet, I think it will be. Verlaine said once 'If I go to sleep, it will come'"

'I know,' Barbet said "But it needs faith to sleep Quessot has it. I wonder—has Verlaine?" and, hearing a step behind him, he turned to find that Monsieur Jugiaud had come on to the balcony to ask if they had dined well Their rooms were prepared. As they had brought no luggage he and his mother had taken the liberty of putting into their rooms the little things they might need

[illegible] Monsieur [illegible] On the [illegible] were standing

Therese began to climb the stairs. "Bon soir, monsieur Bon soir, madame' At the turn of the staircase, she stood aside that Barbet might go ahead with the light Down the passage," she said "My door has steps leading up to it.

At the steps he paused, comparing the numbers of doors and keys, then, having opened her door for her, himself went forward She entered her room in darkness and waited Soon a gleam of light, shining up the stairs that connected her room with his, curled upon the rounded section of her wall and threw a narrow wedge, like a sword's blade across her ceiling She remained silent, knowing him to be as yet unaware that a door was open between them As her eyes became accustomed to the darkness, her mirror and bed appeared, she moved across the room and, opening her curtains on the river, sat at the window and leaned out.

She listened to Barbet's movements in the adjoining room So quiet was the night that she heard the winding of his watch Two nights ago she thought I lay *in bed* self pitying, clutching his letters,

and smiled at it, and saw it as a scene of tragedy and smiled at it again It had been in her mind to ask: What can we ever be to each other, you and I? but she feared that the question was in his mind also and dared not speak it.

To-night, to-morrow and to-morrow night, she said within her. Shall we ever again be together so long? To-morrow they would cross the river and go up the hill into the forest of Vernon. To-night Hugo was lying in state under the Arc de Triomphe; to-morrow he would be buried; her place would be empty in the Rue Soufflot. It seemed that she had been many weeks absent from Paris, and she remembered from afar the day on which she had signed her name in Hugo's book. She remembered it so clearly, seeing her pen move across the page, that she felt again the solitude of Barbet's absence and suffered again that greed and pressure, that stress of the brain, which had been her passion for Templéraud. In Barbet's presence were sanity and reassurance.

"To-night, to-morrow and to-morrow night—"

"Why do you say that, Thérèse?"

"I'm sorry," she said with a smile. "My old sin—counting the hours. All to come! None yet in the past! Oh, Barbet, how little you know me! [illegible] ll love you alw[illegible]"

He took h[illegible] and silenced her. "You and I will not make prisons for ourselves, Thérèse."

She shook her head "You are strange," she said "So be it. I love you, Barbet."

making a tragedy of my life, and he was awake in the train; he has not told me the true cause of his wakefulness. This evening, when perhaps he was about to tell me, Monsieur Jugiaud came, and he accepted the interruption as patiently as he accepts all things. Searching her memory for indications of the truth, Thérèse believed suddenly that she had come upon it. "Everything you did," she had said, "was once as simple as a man's opening his eyes when daylight comes." He had answered that this was how he wished it to be. And she had asked: "But it is not?" and she had asked again: "Is it Blachère?" To this he had not replied, and it seemed to her now that he had guided their conversation away from Blachère—always, always, whenever that name had been spoken between them, it had been allowed to fall away, its challenge unanswered. At that moment she heard his door move on its hinges.

"Thérèse!"

"Barbet."

"You are in the dark."

So relieved was she by the sound of his voice, which in its calmness seemed an answer to all her fears, that she began to laugh and answered: "Of course I am in the dark. You stole my candle."

"I'm sorry. Here it is. Are you in bed?"

"How could I be in bed with no light to undress by? I have been staring out of the window."

He advanced up the stairs and stood before her, candle in hand, barefooted, wearing a great-coat of Jugiaud's—a comic figure at which she began to smile, but there are moments at which no man wishes to be thought comic, though he is loved the better for it, and she turned to the window and said:

"Look, Barbet. On the skyline. You can still see our trees."

He knelt beside her on the sofa, his hands deep in the pockets of his coat, and with a sudden, gentle movement laid his cheek against hers. She held firm, resolute to say nothing and do nothing.

"Thérèse, if I am to go away, tell me to go. . . ." But she was silent. "Thérèse!"

"What am I to you?" she said. "What can I be?" And, regarding the little scene from outside herself, she saw it as a scene of comedy

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"Thérèse, if I am to go away, tell me to go " But she was silent "Thérèse!"

"What am I to you?" she said "What can I be?" And, regarding the little scene from outside herself, she saw it as a scene of comedy

and smiled at it, and saw it as a scene of tragedy and smiled at it again. It had been in her mind to ask: What can we ever be to each other, you and I? but she feared that the question was in his mind also and dared not speak it.

To-night, to-morrow and to-morrow night, she said within her. Shall we ever again be together so long? To-morrow they would cross the river and go up the hill into the forest of Vernon. To-night Hugo was lying in state under the Arc de Triomphe; to-morrow he would be buried; her place would be empty in the Rue Soufflot. It seemed that she had been many weeks absent from Paris, and she remembered from afar the day on which she had signed her name in Hugo's book. She remembered it so clearly, seeing her pen move across the page, that she felt again the solitude of Barbet's absence and suffered again that greed and pressure, that stress of the brain, which had been her passion for Templéraud. In Barbet's presence were sanity and reassurance.

"To-night, to-morrow and to-morrow night—"

"Why do you say that, Thérèse?"

"I'm sorry," she said with a smile. "My old sin—counting the hours. All to come! None yet in the past! Oh, Barbet, how little you know me! I co...

love you al...

He took ...

prisons for ... Thérèse."

She shook her head. "You are strange," she said. "So be it. I love you, Barbet."

Chapter 12

THÉRÈSE HAD DRAWN BACK THE CURTAINS BEfore they slept and it was by the sun, flowing in over the hills and across the river from the direction of Giverny, that she was awakened. The slope of her ceiling surprised her; she sat up, found a head on the pillow next to hers, and saw that it was Barbet's. Now that is very odd, she thought, and put her hand out to touch his head, then withheld it that the daylight should awaken him also when he was ready.

This morning, in the sunshine, the sadness and misgiving of last night were gone; she was as light-hearted as she had been in the Gabrielle d'Estrées and knew that, when Barbet awoke, she might, if she did not guard her tongue, say flippant, unmeaning things that were even now running over the surface of her mind like will-o'-the-wisp over the surface of a lake. It had long been her intuition to play early-morning scenes as light comedy; only thus might their monotony be broken, and men, who would always take their tone from her, be turned aside from embarrassing attempts to renew, when the retreat was sounding, the passionate assurances of attack. They would say, if they had not Courcelet's discretion, that she differed from all other women, or even, as desire reawoke in them, would mumble into her pillow that no experience of their lives had been equivalent with this. Light comedy, farce, even poor farce, were, she had found, welcome alternatives to this tarnished ritual.

She turned away from Barbet, for he was no part of these recollections and she wished to empty her mind of them. And yet, in what other words than those she had too often heard might she express the truth: that no experience of her life had been equivalent with this? This had differed from other experience not in the degree of its

pleasure but in kind . . Poor Thérèse has no man ever had the wit to say that to you? . It had differed because, now, if she dared to look over her right shoulder instead of her left, she would see the man whom she loved and whose love for her was not an undermining but a reinforcement of her citadel, which was his own, neither by his capture nor by her surrender, but in the nature of that singleness which they had last night discovered . Foolish Thérèse —and yet, why foolish? It isn't foolish to be surprised, even by love When word or fortune changes its meaning, the only folly is to cling to what is old, to turn one's head away from the changing wind . . She looked at him again, impatient that he should awake and speak to her, desiring that he should sleep in peace. Of course, she thought, if he stays in my shadow, he will go on sleeping, but, if I lean back, the sun will shine in his eyes

She leaned back he stirred and his eyes opened He sat up, pushed the hair back from his forehead and recognized her

'Bon jour, Barbet"

"Bon jour, Therese"

'Enchantee de faire votre connaissance"

He opened his eyes wide "Honore, mademoiselle."

A little silence followed 'I'm not used to the sun yet," he said "Why are you looking awed, Thérèse? While I blink, you are entitled to laugh at me"

"That's all right," she said, "as long as you laugh too You see, five minutes ago I felt like light comedy And then I didn't. And then you woke up And then we met, and you said 'Honoré, mademoiselle.' Why did you say that?"

"Well, I was just awake enough to take my cue"

"And to know I was playing a scene?" Then, in a different tone, she added 'We are playing it still"

'Wh

" . . . "Because I don't know this [illegible] it's unrehearsed And, apart from that," she added with deliberate lightness and so quickly that he could not interrupt her, 'I do *like* you in the morning Were you surprised to see me?'

He smiled 'As a matter of fact," he said, "I had seen you before.

I woke earlier. I think it was the noise of the barges getting under way."

"Didn't you notice me? I must have been on that pillow."

Again before he could answer, she continued her stream of talk, putting out a foot into the sun and letting herself down from the bed. She went about the floor barefoot, and seated herself at the mirror to brush out her hair. Barbet rose and, having stayed by her for an instant, checking her hand that held the brush and turning her face to him, went to his own room. She called to him that she had no bell; if he found one, he was to ring it. First, coffee; hot water in an hour.

"An hour? Does it take an hour to drink coffee?"

"An hour and a half," said Thérèse. "This is a holiday."

She returned to bed and propped herself with pillows Barbet found her with the tray of coffee at her side Everyone else, she thought, has surprised me too little

"You surprise me," she said, "every time you walk into the room."

"But why?"

To this there was, in words, no answer but one of the many answers too often heard for her to speak them She stretched out her hand to him and said: "Admit that it is odd, Barbet For you too. When the barges woke you, where did you think you were?"

"The barges told me. Then I saw you"

"And you said to yourself 'That is Thérèse.' And then? Be honest. Last night, when you came to me—before we knew, I mean, what we know now—weren't you then, in part at any rate, being kind and charming and—" She laughed into the eyes that were looking at her over the rim of the coffee-bowl he was holding in both his hands "Like asking a lady to dance?"

"I loved her, Thérèse"

"Ah yes. Thank God That as well But admit that then—" She held out her bowl. "Please give me some more coffee"

With her fingers closed round the bowl, she leaned back on her pillow and smiled.

"Isn't it true," she said, "if we see it in the sunlight of morning, that we were being extremely polite to each other?"

Beyond her window boxes a barge was making its way slowly up-river shaded by the poplars and willows of the island "They are drinking coffee too," she said, and because there was nothing she did not wish to experience in Barbet's company she suggested that some day they should make a journey by barge from Vernon to Mantes; from Rouen to Paris, she added, her plans increasing, from Rouen to Paris would take how many days? She did not wait for the answer he could not give, for her mind had reverted to the boats they had seen from the balcony where they had dined Was there wind enough to sail? There was no wind, not a sway in the poplar branches, even the blades of thin grass that had sprung up among the flowers in the window boxes were still until a pair of sparrows came to peck, and flew away, and returned, and flicked their tails, and pecked and stared.

"Friends of yours, Barbet"

His eyes were already on them She watched the quiet and gentleness of his face.

"Do you know, Therese," he said, as though giving answer to all she had said, an answer reserved and considered while she had been chattering, "I suppose it is, as you say, rather odd—you and I, sitting here with our coffee cups Look. Come nearer You can see us in your mirror"

"A most improbable picture," she said

"Well," he answered, "I suppose it is I suppose we ought to consider ourselves as improbable a pair as ever awoke on the same pillow —is that what you meant by our having been 'polite' to each other?— and yet, whenever we are together, it seems to me always the most natural thing in the world"

She caught her breath, then steadied herself His words, spoken without emotional emphasis as though he were stating a fact, plainly evident to him, which he had expected her to have recognized, filled her with such happiness that she bit her lip to drive back tears, then laughed to conceal them and pretended she was laughing—at what?

"Only your bewildered face! Do I bewilder you, Barbet?"

She put the coffee tray out of danger 'Come and look at the river Then we will dress."

Below them when they leaned out, was the roof of the balcony on which they had dined Monsieur Jugiaud's head appeared He hailed a man in the street who was trundling a barrow piled with vegetables, and the man looked up, called his reply and turned his barrow into a yard at the side of the Trois Couronnes Far down r a small boat loitered with slack sails.

"Poor Victor Hugo!'

'Well, there's fame if you like," Barbet answered

'Still" she said, 'I'm glad I'm not being buried to-day, even in the Pantheon. Why are you looking at me like that? Why are you laughing at me? There should be a law No one should b allowed to be buried on the 1st of June"

BOOK FOUR

The Doors Open

I'll walk where my own nature would be leading—
It vexes me to choose another guide—

—EMILY BRONTË.

Chapter 1

WHEN BARBET RETURNED TO THE MAISON Hazard, he found it less easy than in the past to bend his mind to the problems of farm, vineyard and prison. Pierre gave him a satisfactory report of work in progress, but said no more of the prisoners than that they had been fed and exercised Barbet did not press him The subject was one of which he himself had no eagerness to speak and he took over his duties as a gaoler with an effort of will Fontan, welcoming his return, asked if he had any fresh tunes in his head, Marcotte, with a child s pride, brought out for his admiration the new foremast he had made for his ship, Balze and Heim, still talkative and inseparable, demanded news of Paris, but Barbet knew that he disappointed them all, he had no tunes for the mandolin, and found that he praised the ship, as if it were separated from him by the glass case of a museum, without sharing its owner's delight in his craftsmanship Blachère s critical gaze, his long silences, his sudden bursts of contempt for the small pleasures upon which the others depended found Barbet vulnerable. His relationship with his prisoners was less spontaneous than it had been He felt that he was being cut off from them and had deliberately to gain mastery over himself that he might not shun Blachere or be unjust to him

In all else he was happy but with an urgent happiness rather than the happiness of settlement and continuity He was tempted more and more strongly to postpone what he could of his administrative work and to go into the fields and vineyards—to labour with his hands That s natural enough, he said to himself, June is the green month who wants to sit at a desk in June? But in other Junes the business of owning the Maison Hazard had been taken in his stride It had been an accepted part of his existence and had not stood

On the way he came upon a man hoeing, and stayed to talk to him The heavy clumps thrown up in April had become friable and were crumbling, the heaps of earth between the rows were being spread and the soil replaced at the foot of the vines, where the men had done their work the earth was again flat and evenly distributed The vines themselves were in a condition that Barbet loved On the main branches, the young shoots had grown fast and their green was luminous against the black of the wood They had not yet spread horizontally and the hoeing was still easy Tiny green flowers with yellow stamens were opening on the small bunches From them came a gentle scent, more elusive than that of lime-trees in flower, more delicate than the sweetness of mignonette, which had for Barbet the special power to cast upon the daytime an evening enchantment, for it was on June evenings that, as a child, he had learned to know it How often, while he lay happily awake long after he had been sent to bed had this fragrance come in to him on the warm, light air! His room, his voyaging mind, and at last his sleep had been filled by it. Ever since it had been for him an evening scent, and there was expectation in it— perhaps because during those nights of childhood it had been most perceptible when a breeze moved under the threat of thunder

What's the vintage to be?' the labourer asked, and Barbet, observing the number of flower bunches on the vines, said he feared it would be a poor vintage In making his estimate, he used his judgment and applied his experience as carefully as ever in the past, but his interest was professional, not personal, as if he were giving advice on property not his own

At the edge of the vineyard he was met by Pierre, who was in so good a humour that even the pieces of paper that came from Barbet's pocket did not cast him down. They went on together over a fold of the ground, and the cottage came suddenly into sight, set in a garden full of roses As they walked Barbet held out the papers one by one and Pierre instantly recognized each of them Though he could read and write if he took pains, he had the memory of the illiterate

Thank you,' said Barbet when he had the information he

against or impoverished his deeper, personal life of field and wood Now he had to compel himself to its tasks When he asked himself why, he knew that the answer was not in Vernon or in Paris but in himself He was not hungry for Thérèse or distressed by jealousy in his absence from her That they loved each other was a source of peace, not of disturbance in him His feeling of increasing detachment from his ownership of the Maison Hazard was independent of Thérèse

He had often told his mother that, if ever she saw him neglecting the place, it would be her business to keep his nose to the grindstone, and often she had twitted him for some small neglect of his father's rigid practice It was a joke between them which gave her a privilege he valued, and he was a little surprised that she did not now exercise it Lacking her reproof, he reproved himself, took off his jacket and settled at his desk to make up arrears

Because he disliked account-keeping above all else, it was the wages-book that he drew towards him In the three workings of the earth—the April digging in clumps, the June hoeing and the light hoeing in July—a labourer earned thirty-two francs for each "journal" or third part of an acre At each working, one man did not regularly cover the same ground, and instalments of pay had to be nicely calculated Pierre had made payments on this and other accounts during the days of Barbet's absence His records of them were written, if written at all on odd pieces of paper accumulated on the desk Many of these scraps had on them a group of figures in sprawling round-hand and little else than figures, only Pierre himself could know certainly to what they referred Though Barbet's knowledge of what business was in hand, aided by a name or a date here and there, enabled him to make sense of most of them, by some he was defeated, and these he clipped together intending to summon Pierre and call upon his memory But the prospect of spending even an hour of a June morning with Pierre sulkily biting a pencil among a pile of account books was a sad one and Barbet knowing that he ought to stay in his chair started up from it, and, with all the delight of a boy escaping from school set out across the vineyards to find Pierre and tackle the job in the open

"But he oughtn't to need such a memory," Renée objected at once "Only day labourers have such a memory as that"

"Nonsense," Barbet exclaimed. "His mother has a better memory than any woman I have ever known He inherits it from her"

Renée was not sure whether to be pleased or displeased by this suggestion "Still," she said, "if one is going to get on in the modern world and be a master and not a servant, one can't be afraid of pen and ink. To grow wine is one thing, but how can you market it without understanding accounts?"

"We were talking of that on the way here," Pierre put in

"Ah," said she. "I'm glad of that. I'm not the only one to tell you."

Come, Renée It wasn't I," Barbet said "It was Pierre himself who was anxious about account-keeping He s completely in agreement with you or I'm mistaken"

She gave her husband a vigorous glance of command and affection

"That's true, I m willing enough to learn," he replied, pulling at the lobe of his ear because he was embarrassed by the discovery of so much virtue in himself "It's not only what Renee says. It's when you are away in Paris that it comes home to me. Isn't the hoeing being done as it should be? Aren't the arrangements for the haymaking made as well as you could have made them yourself? I could run this place, Victor says, if it weren't for the prison and the accounts"

At the word Victor" Renee had frowned warningly but too late Having stumbled on to the end of his sentence, Pierre fell into the sheepish and apologetic silence of a man whose wife's wits are readier than his own. *So* Victor too is behind Pierre's ambition, Barbet thought. When Anton has become owner of the Maison Hazard, Pierre is to run it—as *what?* as manager or as tenant? In either case there will be good pickings for the Vincent family

The plot ruffled him The Maison Hazard was his home and his mother's, the système Vincent was over reaching itself

'Yes," he said, ' but the prison and the accounts remain, Pierre

needed, "that is clear enough. But why don't you write it down at the start? It would save trouble."

"I know But it's dull, all that writing, for another man's accounts"

"Duller than work in another man's vineyard?"

"That's different," said Pierre. 'There's pleasure in that Besides, in the vineyards I see the thing through from beginning to end I have as much to do with them as you do yourself—more, if it comes to that But the accounts are yours"

"You are welcome to them, I promise you"

"That may be," said Pierre, answering Barbet's grin with his own "But I couldn't do the accounts if I tried Everything else I could—the vintage, the hay, the harvest, everything—"

"Distillation?"

'Well, I grant you, you're my master there, and you're a cooper and I'm not, but every vine grower needn t be able to make his own barrels, and, as for the distillation—I learned a lot last winter You have to set to and learn when you re a married man and a child is coming"

It was thus that gave Barbet the key to Pierre's new mood Renée had stirred ambition in him and was converting him from oaf to vine-grower, the intelligence of the Vincents, long retarded was now emerging And if I hadn't been so stupid as to decide that he could never be much more than an animal, Barbet thought, I might have noticed the change long ago, there have been signs enough—he has begun even to take a pride in his clothes, the cottage is neat, the garden is cultivated for flowers as well as vegetables Pierre and Renee are on their way to becoming proprietors in spirit, though indeed there's little enough they own

With a politeness clearly intended to mark her rise in life, Renée brought chairs into the garden and a dish of plums She carried them past the oleanders growing in great wooden boxes against the south wall, and set them down in the shade To explain his visit, Barbet brought out the papers from his pocket and laughed at Pierre for the excellence of his memory

"But still, it is always a good thing to learn," Barbet interrupted, "and if Pierre wants to learn, I ll teach him Anyhow, there are the books. They are all open to him For the most part he can teach himself"

As he said this, he remembered that his mother had warned him long ago against giving Pierre access to the books. "His brother will always be looking over his shoulder," was her way of putting it. 'We don't want the Vincents poking their noses into our affairs" It was just comment, his mother knew the world, there could be no greater commercial unwisdom than to contribute information to the système Vincent, perhaps it was, in a measure, true that Pierre had been deliberately discouraged from meddling at the desk Well, thought Barbet, it shall be true no longer, and he wondered what his father would have said—what his mother would say when she knew

'And now," he continued, 'tell me. As a proprietor, Pierre—shall we need all our hay this year or can we sell some of it?"

But Pierre would not commit himself "It looks a good crop but who can tell what we shall get in?'

If Madame Hazard noticed that Pierre now came more often to Barbet s workroom, she did not speak of it. The increasing heat made her sleepy and often, during the period of the labourers' afternoon rest—the time chosen by Pierre for his visits, she was asleep in her bedroom The deaf woman, Madame Garbut nodded in a wicker chair at the kitchen door Until Pierre rang a hand bell at half past two, no one stirred in field or vineyard

The haymaking prospered Every night the drying grass was gathered into great heaps in the meadows for protection against rain and every morning re-spread in the sun, but the thunderstorms, when they came, were neither heavy nor prolonged and the grass dried quickly Having time to spare, Barbet knew that, before the harvesting of barley and oats was upon him, he should take his opportunity to visit Angouleme His annual agreement with Anton was waiting to be renewed and there was other business to be done with his lawyer Every evening he said to himself I must go to-

And so, for that matter, do I Or had Victor thought of buying a vineyard for you elsewhere? Heaven knows, they are to be had cheaply enough in the Grande Champagne—the best vineyards in France for the price of a mud-heap I may be mad—Anton thinks I am—but I believe they will recover It would pay a man to buy and wait"

Before he had finished saying this, his feeling of resentment against Pierre was gone, and he turned from the subject to praise the roses, Paul Meyron and La France

"If you are going to be proprietors," he said, "you should have a pomegranate and a fig And if you are to have a pomegranate, you must have a high stone wall for it to look over And if you have a stone wall, you must have a gateway, Renée"

At last she saw that he was laughing at her and, because she liked Barbet and had always liked him, she smiled in return

"To buy a place in the Grande Champagne," she said 'I wonder! We might be able to borrow the money"

This, Barbet knew, was a diversion She had no intention of buying across the river—money or no money

"Even there,' she added, "Pierre would have to know about accounts I think it isn't fair to shut him out from them He ought to be given a chance to learn"

The glorious insolence of persistent women!

"Shut him out!" said Barbet "Bless my soul, have I shut you out from them?'

"No," Pierre answered stubbornly under Renée's eye, 'but now I should like to learn"

For a moment Barbet hesitated What an innocent they must suppose me to be! he thought, and in his mind he heard Victor saying to them You must get to understand the whole business so that when Barbet goes you can fall into his place Renée's denial came pat

"You mustn't suppose that we have our eye on *this* place, she said in a tone intended to comfort and disarm 'You are comfortable here and your mother too—and, of course, there are the prisoners It is out of the question But still—"

'But still, it is always a good thing to learn," Barbet interrupted, "and if Pierre wants to learn, I'll teach him Anyhow, there are the books They are all open to him For the most part he can teach himself"

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Among the lucern at the roadside patches of ox-eye daisies shone the brighter in the fading light but the blue of the meadow clary had deepened into its own purpose and was already a ghost, receding into the darkness of the green vegetation. Barbet drew up the reins and the pony was still

"What is it, Barbet?"

"A nightingale, I thought. Almost the last we shall hear of him Perhaps the last."

Madame Hazard listened, but there was nothing to be heard except the reeling of a nightjar from within the wood and the noise of the field crickets She touched her son's arm "I should have liked to hear him," she said "Are you sure you heard him?"

"Yes, mother"

"Quite sure?"

"Quite sure"

"That will serve," she said cheerfully "Good bye, nightingale Now let us make haste home. I wouldn't miss the first gleam of the bonfires"

They sat in the garden together to watch the sky deepen over the hill of the Grande Champagne and remained for a long time silent In the opposite villages on the ridge, points of fire appeared, at first so small that they vanished and came again as men walked across them, but steadily increasing His mother, recognizing the villages, spoke each name quietly but made no other comment

"Barbet," she said presently, "don't wait for me."

"But, mother, I shall go to my workroom in any case for a little while First, I will see you to bed"

"I am not talking of bed"

"Of what, then?"

"Of this place. Home. What a fuss I made before you pulled down that wall! In your father's time, we sat outside the garden to watch the bonfires And now the wall is gone and I don't miss it Is that growing old?"

"Most people cling more and more to their possessions as they grow old."

"Do they?" she replied. "That is what the young think It isn't

true, Barbet And what, may I ask, have you done this year about your agreement with Anton? Have you been to Angoulême?"

"Not yet"

"Has Victor been at you again, wanting you to sell?"

"Not at me," said Barbet, 'but really Victor sometimes behaves as if I had sold already" Thinking it better that his mother should be told than that she should be made suspicious by Pierre's coming to his desk, he gave her an account of his visit to the cottage The effect upon her surprised him

"Well," she said calmly, 'it is time he learned" She watched the fires, turning her head slowly "Burning down I'll go upstairs now, Barbet I like to see them from my room" He gave her his arm "You must go your round of the walls, my son"

"Yes, mother'

At the door, under the vine, she stopped Do you want to sell, Barbet?"

"Why should I, mother?"

"When you were younger, I didn't know you very well" she answered 'Now you and I are closer to each other I know when you're going on a voyage'

"And if I sold where should we live?'

"You mean where should I die? Is that it? I shall not die in this house Nor you I am becoming lighter" She put her arm round his shoulder and made him stoop down so that she might whisper in his ear I said good bye to the nightingale" She began to chuckle 'Think of that! Just think of that! If I were to say 'nightingale' to Emilie Vincent she would quote for half an hour If I were to whisper in her ear, she would go mad It was Thérèse Despreux who whispered in her ear Don't wait for me Good night, dear Barbet Here is my candle I shan't need it I can find my own way to bed"

Barbet went to his workroom and turned up his lamp On his desk were sheets of paper covered with Pierre's laborious sums When he had corrected them, he began a letter to Thérèse in which he told her that he had driven home by the road on which they had met the grass-snake, but at first said of his mother only that she had enjoyed

watching the bonfires and had now gone to bed Then he added "I wonder if you will understand what she meant when she said to me that she was 'becoming lighter' I think she meant that she felt less bound—to the past, to the Maison Hazard, to everything It must be good to grow old like that It isn't that she's afraid of dying I am sure she is not. On the contrary—less and less afraid It is just that she is weighing anchor"

The next words he wrote were "Suddenly there was a great bump and flutter against the window pane I thought he was gone but a moment later he found the open part of the window and was in the room He shook the lamp and fell on this paper, a huge moth I had to blow out the lamp He was on the paper still I suppose he was stunned, for he let me put him out on the sill with scarcely a flutter I closed the shutters and pulled the curtains, as I should have done before I sat down to write. But all is well I have just been outside and he is gone Look how big he is I will draw his outline on this paper where he rested It isn't every day that a Great Night Peacock sends his visiting card to the Quai d'Orléans."

Under the heat of July, Pierre abandoned arithmetic, he would begin again, he said after the vintage Meanwhile, though all work but light hoeing had ceased in the vineyards, he had enough to do with the harvesting, and Renée s desire to assert her independence of the family of Hazard was satisfied by her taking a conspicuous part in the celebrations of the Fourteenth of July from which Madame Hazard, as a good Bonapartist, abstained Anton compromised, flying the tricolour from the office of Hazard and Vincent but not from his private house As mayor, he lent his countenance to the torchlight procession on the 13th, and next afternoon Bette gave away prizes to winners of sack races and of competitions on the greasy pole but it was Barbet who, by a custom of long standing, presided over the boys swimming competitions in the Charente The routine was invariable His mother would enter a formal protest against his going at all, standing at his wheel as he mounted the gig, and he, as she expected, would wave his whip and drive off Having put up his pony in a comfortable shade at the Cheval Pie and re-

"Oh dear, I suppose you are right, Emilie," said Madame Hazard with a laugh and a sigh. "But I was thinking of the price of fireworks, you know I hadn't given a thought to the liberties of France. Now, Barbet, we had better be going home. Good night, dear Emilie. How noisy your swifts are!"

"But we have not finished our game," Madame Vincent objected firmly "We were in the middle of a game when the fireworks began, and I was winning"

"I will give you the game, dear Emilie."

"To be given a game is not the same as having won it You know that, Chouquette."

Madame Hazard knew it well She hesitated between the joy of cheating Emilie of a victory and her private desire not to go to bed

"We could take another glass of wine in the parlour," Madame Vincent suggested encouragingly

Madame Hazard cast about her for an excuse to accept "It is true," she said, "that last Monday, though it was my birthday, I went to bed at my usual time," and, putting her head on one side, she yielded to temptation

This gave Madame Vincent so much pleasure that she generously asked the question that her guest expected of her and to which she had long known the answer

"Of course, Chouquette Your birthday Were you sixty four or sixty five?"

"*Now* Emilie, you have so good a memory, you ought to remember that When I was born, the Emperor had not been three months in his tomb"

When the last sheaves were being taken from the cornfields and a yellowish lustre had begun to appear on the swelling grapes, Barbet had more time to spend with his prisoners. He kept pitchers of water for them in the passage leading to their courtyard, and took it to them often, fresh and cold Once, while sitting with them under their ilex, he looked up, to find Blachère standing beside him. His first impulse was of revulsion He turned to the other prisoners and spoke to them as if Blachère did not exist They talked to him and

'It will be hot even in the wood"

But he was determined to go He wanted to put a distance between himself and Blachere and to be possessed again of his own mind It was a silent and torpid day, too heavy for the song of birds, and the night, when it came, would be blanketed by heat, even the field crickets would have exhausted their chorus and darkness would be scraped by the dry vibration of locusts. This afternoon nothing was to be heard but the cirl bunting—not a blackcap, not a yellow hammer the dry meadows and the woods seemed to be empty, and the cirl bunting was part of the dryness of the air It must be poor fun to be a bird and make a noise like a locust, Barbet thought, and a smile broke over his face, his heart lifted, and there before him, for once content to be visible, was a golden oriole He sat down and watched it.

among themselves, excluding Blachere, who at length walked away and sat down alone Determined to remove a barrier for which he felt himself to be, in part, responsible, Barbet went over to Blachere and tried to talk to him, but the attempt failed

"Why do you waste your time with me?" Blachère said at last "You have nothing to give me I don't want kindness from you I want a life of my own"

Barbet knew this to be true, but, with a pride of spirit that Blachere alone could provoke he began to justify himself The others were by nature pacific men, there was no principle of evil in them, beneath their differences was a sense that they were part of the human community, their suffering in imprisonment was that it exiled them from common life Blachère was in his own nature and by his own will an exile and a rebel and imprisonment was to him what a cage would be to a bird of prey I am being as great a fool as I should be if I were to set about the taming of a vulture Barbet said to himself I have nothing to give him because he is my enemy and hates me

Or had he nothing to give because he was growing to hate and despise his prisoner? He came humbly to Blachère and almost begged for his friendship but the humility was false Even while he struggled to override the differences between them he nursed them and became proud of them and decided that there was a principle of evil in this man which removed him from the community of men

Probably Barbet decided the truth is that certain men cannot associate together without damage to each other and Blachere and I are two such men Of all men on earth I am the least fit to be his gaoler

In the end he left Blachere and returned to the other prisoners but he was exhausted as though he had lost blood and was glad when the time came to give them their supper and leave them

I am going into Roussignac he told his mother

"For what, Barbet?"

"For the walk

"I should wait until later in the evening It is still hot

"I shall go through the wood

stubborn undertone, the heart had gone from his playing but he feared that the others might despise him if he ceased Blachère has the power to sap the pleasure from whatever a man does, Barbet thought, by planting fear in him Marcotte was hollowing out a lifeboat for his model ship and fitting into it a thwart so tiny that he could not manipulate it with his fingers but coaxed it into position with the tip of a penknife He loved this work in miniature and had only one fear—that he might break his spectacles Barbet had given him others, laboriously matched in Angoulême, but Marcotte had rejected them, there were not, and could not be in this world, any spectacles but his own, and now, when the time came to return to barrel making, he looked up over them at Barbet with the expression of a man who had been disturbed in a dream Heim shouted to Blachère that work was beginning again and Fontan laid down his mandolin

Since he had led the riot that failed, Blachere had never refused obedience His method of opposition to his gaoler was more subtle and personal, a slavish, inhuman docility was part of it, and he came now from his cell with a dragging submission, as though he wore chains. From the level of the courtyard two steps mounted to the floor of the shed. As he came up them, he stumbled and his right foot shattered the wood of the mandolin

'No! No! No!" Fontan cried, his voice rising to a shriek of impotent fury

Blachère disengaged his foot. His cheeks rose and seemed to swell under his eyes. A storm of excited comment broke out, Heim saying again and again I was facing him I saw what he did," and Marcotte rubbing his hands together and uttering quick, shrill sounds like those of a frightened bird

'I stumbled,' Blachère said at last, and the cries against him were renewed. He looked at none of his accusers, but at Barbet steadfastly

'Why did you do that?"

I stumbled You didn't see."

It was true that Barbet had *not seen* but it was necessary that he should judge He knew the futility of punishment and, at the same

Chapter 2

IT HAD BEEN A PECULIARITY OF THE BARREL-MAKing in the prison courtyard that, though Blanchère had learned the use of osiers and was at least as skilled as the rest in other branches of the craft, he had not been entrusted with the chip-axe. He had not asked for it and Barbet had not offered it to him. Each was aware, and knew that the other was aware, of the omission, and that it was unreasonable. The cooper's hammer, the adze, was as formidable a weapon; the chip-axe itself could have been seized from the hands of another if Blachère had been minded to attack. Nevertheless, having felt at the outset an ill-defined reluctance to put an axe into Blachère's hand, Barbet had never taught him the use of it. Sometimes Blachère picked it up, turned it over in his great hands and passed it on, under Barbet's eye, to Balze or Marcotte.

One September morning, during an interval in their work, Barbet and his prisoners were sitting together in the cover of an open shed on the west side of the prison courtyard. As soon as tools were laid down, Blachère had gone, as he often did, to his own cell, for it pleased him that eyes should follow him as he went and gaze at him curiously when he returned. Meanwhile Fontan brought his mandolin, which had been standing against the trunk of the ilex, and began to feel his way into little tunes, looking to Barbet for recognitions. From his cell, Blachère shouted to know if they were never to be free from this everlasting strumming. "He hates it," said Marcotte with relish. "It's like a fly biting a horse." Encouraged by Balze to continue, Fontan, because he was afraid, steeled himself with the defiance of weak men and stood up, facing the cells, and shouted his song.

Blachère slammed his door but made no further protest. Fontan's defiance spent itself; the thrumming of his mandolin continued in a

its bars He appeared to have established for himself a routine which he followed strictly When the other prisoners were at work or exercise in the courtyard, he watched them for a great part of the time and they became aware of his head always occupying the same position in the aperture, as if it were a dummy on a stake At moments of the day which they were able to foretell, the head vanished It was to be presumed that Blachere slept, but Barbet never found him sleeping When he was visited, he was always in the same position, lying on his left side on the planks that were his bed raised on his elbow, his head supported by his hand, his fingers embedded in his loose scalp, his eyes on the door He did not stir, but allowed his food and water to be put down beside him, and did not reply if he was spoken to or himself speak until Barbet was about to go Then he would say You would suffer more if you were in the rat hole It is hot and dark ' Or he would throw out his challenge "You can't put me in the rat hole, I have broken no rule." At each visit, he used one of these phrases No other words passed his lips If another prisoner spoke to him he did not answer During the whole daytime, no sound came from his cell

After midnight between one and four each morning, he kicked his door and howled at regular intervals of four minutes Each night there were thirty six of these outbursts—twelve to the hour Each lasted for a minute The kicks were slow, methodical and evenly delivered, as unemotional as the swing of a pendulum They resounded through the courtyard and through the window of Barbet's bedroom which overlooked it. In the whole proceeding one element only was uncertain Except by counting, it was impossible to know whether, on each occasion the pendulum would swing thirteen or fourteen times At their work next day the prisoners would dispute whether thirteen or fourteen was the right number They could not be sure even that the number varied or that they had not lost count That he might be sure, Fontan gathered fourteen corkscrew shavings of Limousin oak and took them into his cell, but next morning fourteen had become sixteen, two of the corkscrews having broken, and his count was discredited The prisoners pretended that the subject was of no importance to them and made a joke of the counting, but,

time, that he must inflict it. He knew also that, if he punished Blachère, he would be submitting to Blachère's own will and design

He said "You will be punished. Go to your cell."

"It is unjust," Blachère replied, not in angry protest but in an even, penetrating tone. "You know it is unjust because you did not see me."

"I have no doubt of what you did"

"*Nevertheless*," said Blachère, "you are punishing me because you are afraid not to punish me"

Barbet again ordered him to his cell and, when he obeyed, followed him and took away his mattress, his table, his candle, and locked him in He determined not to relax the rule of punishment, to exercise Blachère briefly and alone, to withdraw all his privileges of food and of freedom within the courtyard As he turned away from the locked door, Blachère said:

"It is you who are inside, Monsieur Barbet"

In the time of Julien Hazard, each cell had in its door a narrow grid, normally closed, and only one other source of light and air—a window set high in the outer wall and barred These bars were tested each night by Barbet, leaning across to them from a grassy ramp which brought him to their level and was divided from the prison wall by a deep and narrow ditch When control of the prison passed to him from his father, he had enlarged the existing grid or spy-hole in each door to an aperture at head-level through which the cell's occupant might look out into the courtyard These door-holes were barred and each was fitted with a glass shutter to be let down in cold weather Through the door holes and the external windows a draught moved that helped the prisoners during the great heats of July and August Only one cell, set apart from the rest at the northern end of the courtyard, was not so fitted It was less than half the size of the others, its external window was a thin slit, its door had no aperture but the old grid Called by Julien the rat-hole, it had not been used in Barbet's time

While under punishment, Blachère made great use of his door-hole. His face was continually and for long periods to be seen behind

"What made you do it, Barbet? Were you angry with him?"

He had not yet asked himself this question and reflected before he answered it.

"No, I wasn't angry He had broken Fontan's mandolin—I am sure deliberately. No," he repeated, "I wasn't angry with him. I punished him because what he had done was a challenge that had to be met."

"Did he suffer?"

"Yes."

"Barbet," his mother said after a moment's pause, "I wonder if it has done any good That other night when you went in and quieted them, you didn't punish them then"

"No"

"That was a challenge"

"Yes," he said, "that was a challenge."

She went about the parlour with her feather brush as though their conversation was ended, and afterwards disappeared into the kitchen. Barbet went to his workroom and sat down to his desk His mother presently came to his door

"I want to ask something, Barbet"

"Yes, mother, what is it?"

"It was yesterday, Friday morning, that you let him out?"

"Yes, Friday"

"Your father would have been armed"

"I was armed"

"Is it true? You are not saying that to comfort me?"

"I was armed," he repeated.

"And now?"

"Yes, when I go into the prison"

"Does he know—Blachère?"

Though he knew that he was misunderstanding his mother, Barbet answered with a laugh not his own and in a voice not his own. "Are you afraid, mother? What are you afr[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] and some of [illegible] things, their [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] and [illegible]. Holding [illegible] in his hand, [illegible] asked "Fourteen or thirteen?" [illegible] and passed them to [illegible]. The [illegible] a smile. The [illegible] to [illegible], who threw them on to the ground.

[illegible] prison so that I [illegible] I must transfer him to the punishment cell. [illegible] the punishment cell may enter his mind and I repent it and be conscious of a sadness in having [illegible] it.

On [illegible] On the [illegible] [illegible] and returned to his former [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] so long [illegible] [illegible].

"Is the punishment over?"

"[illegible]"

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he w[illegible]

S[illegible]

it fr[illegible]

though they laughed and spoke of other things, their conversation al ways returned to Blachère and his imprisonment Holding out some pebbles in his hand, Marcotte asked "Fourteen or thirteen?" Fon tan intentionally miscounted them and passed them to Heim The prisoners began to giggle over them like schoolgirls with a secret The pebbles were handed to Barbet, who threw them on to the ground

At night Barbet argued with himself in this way Blachère is dis turbing the prison so that I may be tempted to reduce his punishment to less than six nights Blachere is disturbing the prison so that I may feel this temptation and harden myself to resist it Blachere is disturb ing the prison so that I may transfer him to the punishment cell Blachere is disturbing the prison so that the punishment cell may enter my mind and I reject it and be conscious of weakness in having rejected it

On the first, the second and the third nights, the kicking of the door began at one o'clock and continued three hours Barbet did not speak of it to Blachere After the third day, whenever he was visited and had spoken one of his two phrases, he added that he was hungry It was true, he was accustomed to eat voraciously, low diet was a cause of suffering to him and he was tormented by need of the tobacco that was allowed to prisoners in the courtyard On the fourth night, he preserved his routine, but on the fifth, he lost the resolution to continue his disturbance regularly He began as before but soon after two in the morning his uproar became rapid and continuous, then ceased On the sixth night, he steeled himself and returned to his former custom His punishment had now run its course and on the morning of Friday the 11th of September he was given a full meal and taken out to work

In the past Madame Hazard had had so little sympathy with Blachère that Barbet had expected her to protest long ago against this new disturbance of her nights, but she said nothing until Satur day morning when, after a quiet night, she inquired

"Is the punishment over?"

"Yes, mother"

wood with glow-worms in his pocket, but not with the same impulse. His leaving it now was not spontaneous, but an action designed to evade Blachère's will and, therefore, conditioned by it He was without lightness of heart, he felt that he was in a trap; and he said to his mother·

"I left the pistol behind, but I was still thinking about it"

She looked at him with so pitiful an expression that he supposed her mind to be wandering or that she had not understood him Then she said as though she were reproving some rashness of a child

"But that is dangerous, Barbet. Better keep the pistol Better stay in the boat Oh yes," she continued ' Half and half is no good Still thinking about it is no good That is how Saint Peter sank"

She spoke so gravely, so lightly, with such an abrupt and ludicrous leaping from idea to idea that Barbet was fascinated

"After all," she said, "it is not surprising A man is walking on the water and it is easy Then the idea comes into his head—'I am not sinking,' and at once he sinks"

"I know," Barbet answered with a grin, "I tried once."

His mother was quietly interested "When was that?"

"When I was a boy"

"You never told me"

"Well I sank Perhaps for the reason you suggest"

"That may be," she answered, ' but of course there are other reasons for sinking"

"Anyhow, he said, "I have gone into the prison armed and I have gone in unarmed One is as valueless as the other"

"Yes she answered, "but when you are ready, Barbet, you will know what to do '

He heard the echo The words had been spoken to him before, but he did not remember the circumstances If only I could stop arguing If only argument would sleep But it needs faith to sleep

'You look tired,' his mother said "Don't work tonight Go to bed early and sleep"

It appeared to Barbet that he had been wrong in withholding the chip-axe from Blachère and he began to teach him the use of it Blachère asked no questions—not even why now for the first time

"Do not let him guess you are armed"

"But why? But why?" Barbet asked in the same pretence of mocking her fears, in the same tone of falseness and patronage

"Do not let him guess, Barbet," she said "It would please him"

When she was gone, Barbet picked up his pen and tried to work; then went into the open and sat on the bench above the pine-trees from which he could see the river Patches of bracken had begun to rust, their yellow shone against the rosy colour of the ling in flower, and the Lombardy poplars were drawing their first golden lines in the valley An early year, he thought, we shall have the grapes in before the month ends, and he tried to keep his mind on the vintage *But he* saw Blachère lying on his side staring at the door of his cell, and his mother's words could not be driven away He remembered the time when she had thought him foolish and impractical and there had been affection but no understanding between them He remembered the phase of her life in which she had supposed, with a part of her mind, that she was the mother of a saint and had expected miracles of him, she had become childish as though she were greatly older than her years, and there had seemed to be no other course than to humour and indulge her It was with this patronizing indulgence that he had tried this morning to treat her, but he knew that it was false, that the justification of it was past, that she had outgrown it. "She is growing up,' he had said to Thérèse at Vernon, and since his return from Paris in June, he had felt continually that his mother, though she preserved her little follies of manner and could be as wilful and pettish and stubborn as ever in the past, had within her a distilled and achieved wisdom which she expressed, not consecutively or in any process of argument, but seemingly in random phrases that struck to the heart of his knowledge of himself

Then why on earth did I take my hand away? Why did I laugh and pretend I didn't understand when she said it would please Blachère to know that I was armed? It is true I ran away from the truth And now I sit here arguing with myself *If only I could stop* arguing, then I should know what to do

That night, when *he took the prisoners* their supper he left the pistol in its niche, as he had left it when he had come in from the

the tautness went from his limbs the huge body became spongy and slack, and Barbet hated him A sickness and pressure of anger was in his throat He heard his own voice, reviling Blachère, emerge from the outcry of voices that drowned Marcotte's whimpering lamentation, then heard it alone, giving orders The heat went out of his indignation, which became separated from its cause, Marcotte and Marcotte's ship had no longer any place in his mind, his hatred was coldly directed against Blachere personally, his decision was clear and required no effort of him Three men held Blachere who made no resistance He was put in the punishment cell and sat on his plank while it was cleaned Barbet locked the door and closed the shutter on the grid Across the courtyard, Marcotte was still on his knees among the fragments of his ship, picking them up, peering at them and tossing them away as a monkey throws away the shells of nuts or allows them to drop from his hand as though he had forgotten them. At sight of Barbet, the old man came to him at a shambling trot in vague expectation of comfort but Barbet had no heart for him He sent him and the other prisoners to their cells. The day's work was over and dusk was beginning to fall

When he returned to the kitchen the deaf woman, Madame Garbut was seated at the stove, her hands folded placidly on her apron

Is the supper ready?"

She could not hear him but his manner brought her to her feet. It was her quietest hour when nothing was required of her except to stir the pot now and then and she could not understand his shouting or the signs he made When at last she understood that he was demanding the prisoners supper, she replied no, no, how could it be ready? it wouldn t be ready for over an hour, her voice shrilled with resentment of what she felt to be an injustice, she stuttered and turned up her shoulder against him, frightened by the unreason of his having asked for the supper an hour before its time "And often, when I have it ready it is you who forget about it, you are out, and everyone has to wait"

He stood at the kitchen-door with his back to her, staring at the tops of the pine-trees that appeared above the break in the ground His mother came in, but he did not shift, and her little steps brought

he was given the axe, and when the others, who had already some knowledge of it, laughed at his clumsiness, he did not reply, but applied himself to learning how to grip and how to swing it His tendency was that of all learners—to grip the handle too tightly with too stiff a wrist and to strike instead of swinging "The oak is cheese," Barbet said "The weight of the head is almost enough Let it fall, let it swing Your job is to guide it, to prevent it from striking too deep" He tried to put his hand over Blachère's that they might swing the axe together, but Blachère's hand was too big The wood came away unevenly, in little chips, until, late on the third afternoon of experiment, the fall of the axe was lucky, and a long shaving, called une anglaise because it was a tradition among coopers that English ladies did their hair in corkscrew curls fell to the ground Marcotte seized it and dangled it in the air "Look what Blachère has made! Look what the good pupil has made! That is better than kicking one's door all night" Blachère straightened himself The chip-axe hung loose in his hand, his eyes narrowed and his feet shifted Then all of a sudden a madness of anger flowed up his body into his face, which became suffused with blood, he threw back his head and twisted it to and fro on its short neck as if this blood were suffocating him, he thrust his way past Marcotte with one rolling swing of his thighs and fell upon the model ship with axe and boot striking and trampling it so that the splinters crackled like a fire and jumped on the stones Balze, Heim and Fontan threw themselves upon him They wrenched at the axe, but its work was done it came easily into their hands Marcotte, unaware of any danger to himself, was on his knees among the ruins of his ship, snatching at fragments, clutching them to his belly, and crying out repeatedly 'My little ship—the months! My little ship—the months!" In the first agony of attack, his hand had run up his face, thrusting his spectacles back, now he had lost them on his forehead, he could not see the fragments he held or understand why he did not see them He curved his back, his head drooped downward, his spectacles slid on his sweaty temples and fell With a movement of extraordinary agility, Blachère stretched out his foot and ground them into the stones

At this, his appearance changed An expression of sensual appeasement, almost of somnolence appeared in his face His eyes dulled,

meadows sloping to the river from high ground beyond Bellis came the barking of a dog—a sound so remote, so small and yet, within its tone, so clear that it enlarged the stillness of evening When it ceased, the distances of hearing lay open to a wide expectancy; for away a brown owl's hooting wound its long, plaintive rhythm through the dusk, to be challenged near at hand by a sudden trill of wanton splendour flung out by a robin from a neighbouring thicket Barbet looked up and searched but could not find him Only the brown owl continued The poplars deepened their mass as the sky closed in upon them Separated from the water by a bank of which the form was each instant dissolving, they and the willows appeared for a time to float in the air above the river's gleam, then to settle and stiffen to their watch A thinning of the clouds let in a milkiness of stars which swam and vanished, and a low sheen, as of glass laid upon darkened silver, appeared on the areas of smooth water between the midstream eddies Night flowed up and a final calm grew upon the scene

Barbet remembered his prisoners by way of their supper, for he too was hungry How long it had been dark he did not know He stood up and began to walk home with the delight upon him of release from pain and of a mind from which poison had been drawn away Sometimes, in the morning, when daylight awakened him, he had felt the pulse of happiness before he remembered its particular cause. Now he experienced the lightness of a decision made, without recalling or attempting to recall the process of decision He saw clearly what he would do and had already done it in his mind when he reached the pinewoods What lay before him was not in doubt or argument, but presented itself to him as a physical re-enactment of scenes already a part of his experience

The kitchen door was shut and locked, as he had supposed that it would be, Madame Garbut having tired of waiting and gone home He let himself in with his own key, and felt his way cautiously to the embrasure in which the lamp would be standing Thus he brought out and lighted [illegible]
of paper on whi[illegible]
quiet."

"Your supper is in the kitchen to-night," he said "You can go there now"

They did not understand "What kitchen?"

'My own kitchen An order has come for your release"

'Release? All of us? Release?"

'What does it mean?'

'It must be an amnesty," said Balze.

Marcotte, with respect for a word he did not understand, asked what an amnesty was

It will be a political amnesty," Balze replied with a townsman's assurance. Then an idea struck him "What has happened? Is there a war? Is there an Emperor in France?'

No, Barbet said, 'there isn't a war or an Emperor"

Blachère s cell was the last to be opened

'Blachere!'

He rose blinking at the light "What is it?"

"You have had no supper"

'Where am I? This isn t my cell?' He stretched out his arms and touched the walls

Barbet took hold of him and led him out The other prisoners were visible on the fringe of the lamp s circle. The excitement of their voices was communicated to Blachère who, not yet understanding what was afoot backed into the doorway of his cell Seeing before him the small figure with the lamp and how isolated it was and how defenceless he swung on the balls of his feet and drew back his arms to strike Barbet raised the lamp to the level of his face and said I am unarmed Blachere, and all the doors are open" As he said thus Blachère ceased to be dangerous, his intentness broke, his impulse swerved as though a cloth had been drawn across his eyes His great body threw its weight back on his heels, the menace and agility went out of it, the head turned from side to side, the gaze dulled and wandered The power of evil in him was displaced [illegible]

[illegible]

G [illegible]

th- [illegible]

The others, who had stood hitherto without initiative—for,

The pot, left at the side of the stove, was warm but not sizzling, he shifted it nearer the fire and increased the draught, then laid on the table six bowls and beside them meat, bread, wine and cheese. Lamp in hand, he went to his own workroom and, taking an iron box from the safe, carried it into the kitchen and opened it After this, he went to a cupboard built into the passage leading to his workroom and brought from it in five bundles the clothes worn by the prisoners when they came to the Maison Hazard Returning to the kitchen table, he prepared five packets of food and put a packet with twenty francs taken from the iron box into a pocket in each bundle of clothing The box was relocked and put back in the safe. This done, he looked round him at the familiar kitchen to be sure that he had forgotten nothing It is ready, he said It was as he had seen it as he walked up from the river

The time had now come to light the lamp which he was accustomed to take with him when he made his nightly round of the walls. When it was swinging from the leather bracelet by which he fastened it to his wrist so that he might have both hands free to test the bars, he thought I shall never test the bars again, and remembered with a smile at the conflict of ideas how much of the life of birds he had learned while performing this duty A song—as yet no more than the stirring of a tune—came into his head Bless my soul he said, it s weeks since I gave Fontan a new song this isn t the moment to be tune making and having lowered the wick of the kitchen lamp that it might not smoke in his absence he took the prison keys from their place inside his shirt and set off down the covered way At the entrance to the courtyard he saw the pistol in its niche and because everything even a pistol had upon him a power of association or companionship as though it were alive he touched the pistol as he might have touched the head of a dog that he was leaving behind

The prison was quiet though all the prisoners except Blachère were awake What is it? they said haven t you brought supper? Marcotte was standing at his door hole looking out into the dark and he said only I saw your lamp coming It was swinging low I knew you hadn't the tureen

Heim began in the voice of a man suspicious of injustice and determined to contend for his rights

"You are not prison breaking No one can punish you for walking through an open door"

'I want a paper—signed," said Balze

"A release paper," said Heim 'What I don't understand is why you are doing this Why are you giving us money?'

'Well, Barbet replied, "you can give it to Fontan if it burns you"

The idea that any man should give money away troubled Heim He was afraid that he might afterwards be accused of having stolen it.

A release paper, he said again 'and write on it—no, write on another piece of paper that you gave us the money"

'Certainly I will' Barbet said 'but it makes no difference, you know and he went into his workroom for pen and ink When he returned Fontan was alone in the room

"Where are they?"

"Flitted

But the papers they wanted?"

Fontan shrugged his shoulders "They took the food and the money out of Blachere s clothes and then—" He spread out his hands.

And you?

Yes Fontan answered, 'I shall go I must go"

You are free to go or stay"

Fontan shook his head 'Where is the spare mandolin? There used to be another Still at that inn?"

The Cheval Pie.'

Where the girl came from" said Fontan.

Why do you ask? Do you want it? You can't carry a mandolin where you are going?'

"No I don t want it,' Fontan replied, his thought so twisting in reluctances and delays and de .
thinking of Eugénie I . . . .

It will be strange ..t o-morrow—no one in the cells. Had

the night, they had not seen that the doors to the courtyard were open, awoke now to their opportunity, and, a fear seizing them of some betrayal which might snatch from them the liberty so long desired, they were swept by Blachere's panic and would have gone at his heels, but, as they were in the instant of flight, Barbet said "You can go now or later, but if you wait for me I will give you food and clothes" He spoke with so steady an assurance that they believed him, and followed him across the courtyard, through the double doorway and into the kitchen Here impatience again shook them An open door leading into the night set their minds flaming with the instinct to escape, Marcotte eyeing it continually with covert avarice and edging towards it with his back to the wall "There's nothing to be gained by running for it," Barbet said, and thrust into Marcotte's hands the bundle of clothes that belonged to him "There's food and money in the pocket Lie low for a time Get clear of the district There'll be no hue and cry As long as I can keep the secret, no one shall know you are gone"

A little reassured but still questioning, the four men began to tumble out of one suit of clothes and into another, pausing now and then to sup the broth poured into their bowls and chattering in disconnected phrases, each of himself his rediscovered possessions, the fit of his old clothes, his darting memories of this shirt, this jacket, chinking his money, tossing from palm to palm his packet of food—as excited as a starling in the reeds

The stress of delay was more, Barbet knew than Marcotte could long endure He was dressed, fumbling with his buckle, edging step by step nearer to the door, and soon would be gone Barbet went over to him and, though he began to grumble at sight of them, put into his breast pocket the despised spectacles bought in Angoulême, then looked at him for the last time and turned his back "He's gone!" cried Fontan When Barbet looked round, Marcotte was no longer in the doorway

"Are we free to go?" said Balze cautiously, speaking for Heim and himself

"If you want to," Barbet answered with a light in his eye

"If we are caught, we shall be punished for prison breaking,"

eim began in the voice of a man suspicious of injustice and determined to contend for his rights

"You are not prison breaking No one can punish you for walking through an open door"

"I want a paper—signed," said Balze.

"A release paper," said Heim "What I don't understand is why you are doing this Why are you giving us money?"

"Well," Barbet replied, "you can give it to Fontan if it burns you."

The idea that any man should give money away troubled Heim He was afraid that he might afterwards be accused of having stolen it.

"A release paper," he said again, "and write on it—no, write on another piece of paper that you gave us the money"

"Certainly I will," Barbet said, "but it makes no difference, you know," and he went into his workroom for pen and ink When he returned, Fontan was alone in the room

"Where are they?"

"Flitted"

"But the papers they wanted?"

Fontan shrugged his shoulders "They took the food and the money out of Blachere's clothes and then—" He spread out his hands.

"And you?"

"Yes, Fontan answered, "I shall go I must go"

"You are free to go or stay"

Fontan shook his head "Where is the spare mandolin? There used to be another Still at that inn?"

"The Cheval Pie"

"Where the girl came from," said Fontan

"Why do you ask? Do you want it? You can't carry a mandolin where you are going?"

"No I don't want it," Fontan replied, his thought so twisting in reluctances and delays and desires that he lost track of it "I was thinking of Eugénie I shall look for her She may be still at Lyons. It will be strange here to-morrow—no one in the cells Had

you thought of that? Who will write down your music for you?"

"I hadn't thought of to-morrow," Barbet said "If one does, you know, one never gets out of prison"

Fontan stood up and looked at the door and at Barbet, then slowly round the room, wishing to be gone but afraid to go

"You are lucky," he said, "to have a home like this And I used to teach music to young ladies In winter, it was always too hot or too cold. If you shut the window, there was the stove, if you opened it, there was a draught The door didn't fit But that is of no interest of you" His face twitched, he held out his hand, and, when Barbet had taken it, overwhelmed by the sentimentality of his violent and timid heart, he stammered "I hate last times That's it Silly, isn't it?" He laughed shrilly and tears came into his eyes "I don't think it was any good putting me in prison A man like me What I did was all over, long before they took me I suppose the idea is that I might do it again But that's silly too A man like me How could I try to kill anyone again? Not twice It isn't possible" He was still clinging to Barbet's hand 'You are brave!' he exclaimed, dropping the hand in extreme embarrassment "To let us go To open the doors and say—shoo! That is seeing everything in one—not in bits and pieces—everything in one Shoo! It is done! You are yourself again! You are brave Like a lion'

Barbet reached for his bowl and emptied it 'Look, he said, 'I'll see you on your way'

Fontan replied with clinging eagerness An expression of confidence came into his face, for he would not now have to go through the door alone They went out together past the musky scent of the garden, past the barred windows and the edge of the wood, and at every step Fontan's spirits rose He stretched his arms he smelt the air, so entranced was he by the sensation of freedom that his fear of its strangeness fell from him On the road north of the prison, running east and west towards Roussignac and St Brice, Barbet halted

"Which way, Fontan?"

"I have a brother at Surgères'

"That is a long way," said Barbet Watch the sun in the morning Keep north-west Listen—along this road for a kilometre, then

what both knew—that, in speaking of the oak, there was nothing they did not speak of "You'll soon be having new brandy to put in the casks," said Quessot. "It's an early year Not many weeks now before you are distilling That's what I like If my casks were like great bottles that held the fluid and no more, where should I be and where would my oak be? It might as well be iron or glass But without my oak to suck, where would the cognac come from? Years my oak works after it's gone from my hand, and years before it comes to me." He jerked a thumb towards the prison. "Are you making coopers of them inside? They'll have to serve a long sentence" Quessot let himself into his shed and prepared his work for the day "What would you do if you woke up one fine morning and found they were all gone?"

'I should walk out of the house, Quessot, and I should see you on your way to work, and we'd walk round together, I dare say, and you'd get your tools out as usual, and we'd talk a bit and no one would be a penny the worse."

"That s true. The oaks wouldn't stop growing, you may be sure," he continued in muffled tones from inside an old smock he was pulling over his head "It seems to me prison's like a glass bottle. Cognac doesn t mature in it, nor men If men have to be shut up, better find some oak to put 'em in." His head now emerged and he poked his chin forward 'Now, what is it?" he said "You look different to-day"—and he came a step nearer "I haven't seen you look like this since you were a boy and up to your games."

But Barbet had not dared tell Quessot the truth. Having given the prisoners their freedom, his business was to preserve it by allowing none but his mother to guess that they were free. It was not easy, though his mother aided him and regarded deception as a delightful game After a few days had passed, she could not resist—and, indeed, did not try to resist the temptation to invite Madame Vincent to supper and to invent for her little anecdotes, which were supposed to have been brought to her by Barbet himself, of what Fontan had said, of what Marcotte had done.

And Blachere—the one who used to disturb you so by his shout-

Chapter 3

When he opened his eyes next morning, Barbet's first thought was that he had not yet decided with Pierre on what day they should begin to pick the grapes and he sat up in his bed with the idea that he would go out at once, as soon as he had drunk his coffee, and look at the vines Coffee Last night, late, he and his mother—and suddenly his mind was flooded with the whole knowledge of what he had done He went to the north window of his bedroom and looked out on the courtyard, remembering how, last night, all the cell doors had stood open

Downstairs he saw Madame Garbut s back She was preparing the prisoners' breakfast Barbet shrugged his shoulders and made for the outer door, at the moment caring only that he should escape be fore she knew that he was in the room and began to upbraid him for having forgotten supper last night He gained the open air and would have gone to the vineyards but on the way saw Quessot and hailed the old man and walked on at his side to the coopers' shed Their way took them round the angle of the house that they might enter the west courtyard by its own gateway and Barbet wished the way was longer so pleasant was it to listen to Quessot s even voice and to walk with his content

"When I was in Paris last time—or rather it was at Vernon—I was talking of you, Quessot

"Of me? And what were you saying of me?" Quessot asked

"Only that you were wiser than I am The oak s more alive to you than it is to me"

"That may be But then I have only the oak You have more windows to your house"

They understood each other perfectly There was no need to say

r beyond the range of St Jean d'Angely At night, when Madame arbut had gone, a part of these supplies could be brought back, but ie broth had to be poured away that the tureen might be returned npty, and cheese, meat and bread would dangerously accumulate lating waste, Barbet nevertheless disposed of them. 'There's no loubt about it," he said to his mother, 'if you don't do what the ommunity expects you are landed in all kinds of absurdities Never hould I have believed that one day I should go out secretly from my own house and bury meat and bread in a pinewood" A smile spread over his face and his cheeks wrinkled How Therese would laugh! he thought *There's a song for Therese!*

He had already begun a letter to Therese and from time to time continued it Some day he would put it in the post, but not until the secret was out.

'When I let them go' he wrote, "I did not think of what would happen afterwards, and I am glad I didn't Some things have to be done for their own sakes or not at all But now you have a song, if you want one, about Barbet in a pretty mess, and happier in it than he has ever been in his life Everybody lives ordinarily in a kind of balance, held in it by dozens of strings, which are what people expect of him and what he has come to expect of himself Cut one of them and everything goes A gaoler who doesn't keep his prisoners or a rich man who gives his money away at once finds that not only is one string cut but that all the others have *shifted* and all the rules which the world made for him have ceased to be relevant And they become fantastic too Every day I carry in food to men who are not there and after nightfall, carry it out again and bury it Madame Garbut expects this of me And I have to buy the food *no one* needs because the people who sell it expect me to buy certain quantities regularly And I have to draw more money than is spent on food because Anton would become suspicious if he didn't pay it out on the appointed days. For the moment, I keep the money apart and I shall somehow rid *myself of it*. But money isn't like meat. Put it in the pinewood—and there it remains, it becomes a buried treasure I suppose I could throw it into the river Anyhow Therese, there's the subject of your satirical song on what happens to Barbet—

ing, dear Emilie—Blachère is a reformed character. He gives Barbet no trouble at all I feel sure he will give no trouble ever again. You see, I am not always wrong"

"What do you mean—that you are not always wrong?"

"You will remember, dear Emilie, that once Barbet had a little trouble with his prisoners And Pierre would have used the pistols and you said—"

"You said what I did, Chouquette There was no difference at the time"

"At the time," Madame Hazard agreed "But then I learn, Emilie That is the difference between us I learn and you don't"

"You mean," said Madame Vincent, "that you are everlastingly changing your mind That is all it comes to" Madame Hazard opened her mouth to say that she disagreed, but her guest was too quick for her "Now! Now!" she cried "It is useless for you to say 'I disagree! I disagree!' You say it like a parrot The truth is, Chouquette, though you call yourself a Bonapartist, you are a revolutionary at heart"

"Certainly But are they not the same thing?"

"No," cried Madame Vincent, "they are not, and, if they are, they ought not to be You think one thing at one moment, another thing the next I can remember that once you were very proud of your consistency 'What I have said, I have said!' Even that has gone You are a thoroughly unstable character—that's the long and short of it" Madame Vincent stiffened herself to deal a final blow. "And so was Bonaparte!"

"In any case," said Madame Hazard, "if we were to stop talking for a moment, you would know by the silence that Blachère is a reformed character"

The two ladies pressed their cards on to the table, cautiously face downwards Not a sound came from the courtyard

Nevertheless, deception was not easy Madame Vincent might be entangled in a rhetoric swifter and more irrelevant than her own, but Madame Garbut was deaf, only action would persuade her, and it fell to Barbet, at the intervals long established by custom to carry into the courtyard tureens and dishes for prisoners who by now were

Barbet turned his head sharply "Who said that? Is that another of Madame Vincent's quotations?"

'No,' said Madame Hazard with composure, "it is not."

As soon as the vintage was in and fermentation had begun, Barbet astonished his brother by asking him to summon a family council

What for?' asked Anton "You have never asked for such a thing before"

"That's because I hate argument," Barbet replied 'This won't be an argument—at least, I think not It is only something I have to say, and I would rather say it to all of you at once than have to say it a dozen times to each in turn"

On the appointed day, he first visited his lawyer in Angoulême and made provision to supplement his mother's personal income. It was arranged that on his return to Roussignac, he should be met by Pierre, who would have Madame Hazard beside him in the tilbury Together they would drive to the house with the gargoyles where the family would be assembled

In fact Victor, Bette, Anton and Madame Vincent had come together long before Barbet s train was due That Barbet should ask for a family council was unprecedented that Madame Hazard should attend gave it a significance that had set all heads wagging, and in Bette s statelest room, formal preparations had been made She herself in a whaleboned dress of deep maroon which creaked when she moved was established on a small sofa with her back to a window, her mother was beside her, a few inches advanced towards the sofa s edge, for she felt uncomfortably at a disadvantage when authority was reversed by her being a guest in her daughter's house. The two ladies heads, one a fringed pile of fair hair, the other highbonneted stood up against a triangle of window light bounded by the looped curtains and the sofa back, and above them hung a birdcage, planned in the Gothic style and decorated with alternate ruby and frosted panes. From this ecclesiastical structure death had kindly released the bird

On Madame Vincent's left hand, at a writing table drawn out

or to anyone for that matter—if he does the opposite of what people expect of him"

The heats of the year were over, the grapes almost fully ripe, and the country was in its second spring After resolve and action, Barbet's mind rested, but he knew that more was required of him, his action being not yet complete, and one evening, after a day spent in examining his casks and in the arrangement of labour for the vintage, he asked his mother what she would do when he was gone.

"They will not leave me here, mother"

"No, Barbet I understand that I have felt for a long time that we were both going away, you and I"

"You could stay if you wished Pierre can manage the property well enough"

She shook her head "No I'll not be a dead stick on any tree."

Still unsure of her understanding, he told her plainly that, when the truth was known, he would be sent to prison

"God will not leave you there," she answered—so quiet an answer that, if she had said no more, Barbet would have left it to bear whatever meaning her thought laid upon it, but she added suddenly, in her voice of mischief and delight France will not leave you there!"

"I don't understand, mother If it comes to that, it is France who will put me there"

"Ah,' she said, 'the law may put you there, the Government may put you there, that is as it should be—an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but France will not leave you there You will see!' She laid her arm in his and walked across the garden at his side "It is one of Emilie's favourite quotations When Paris is angry she marches to the Bastille, when she is tortured, to the Rhine, but when she laughs, to the Élysee' You will see France likes men whose ideas are their own and who put them into effect She knows how to be grave and how to laugh"—Madame Hazard patted his hand with a firm, imperious touch—"and when she laughs the angels are her cavalry"

At this point brother and sister fell into an exhausted silence, and [illegible] med to his theme of the partnership His point was that [illegible] at the product of a vineyard hitherto exempt from the phylloxera, and if Barbet was going to offer them his reserves as well as his futures, he had something to bargain with that would be hard to resist.

'But a partnership!" Victor protested

"If he insists! Only if he insists!" Anton replied testily "The game is in his hands. The value of his reserves has risen As for the phylloxera, it cuts both ways. There is still a risk that his vineyards may be hit, but they haven't been and, as they stand, they are worth half again what they were It all fits in," Anton added "I thought this June, when he came to renew his agreement with me, he would put up the price But he didn't There it stands as it has always been since father s time Victor says it isn't a legally operative agreement anyway, but—"

'Nor is it,' said Victor "Barbet undertakes to sell to no one but you and, if to you, at an agreed price. But it is always open to him to say In fact I won't sell at all except for a higher price, and if you want it—'"

"Ah, you are too clever, Victor," Anton interrupted. "Barbet won t do that The agreement is convenient between two brothers It is useful to have a price understood between us Anyhow, there it is. If at any time in the next twelve months he wishes to sell, he will offer the property to me at a *hundred and sixty thousand francs.* A hundred and sixty thousand! Bless my soul. That was father's figure It has always been worth more than that, and now—why, I'd give him two hundred thousand tomorrow! And why do you suppose he didn t put up the price? Because he doesn't care Because he doesn't mean to sell at all Because he means to *buy*—and buy a partnership in Hazard and Vincent!"

The argument was interrupted by the arrival of the tilbury A silence fell. The family eyed one another with the air of people in the waiting-room of a *railway station* who have long ago tired of

from its place by the wall, was Victor He had been taking, or was prepared to take notes, and was trying to pluck from his nib a hair that was the result of his too conscientious use of a flannel pen wiper Beside Victor and close to him was a low plush stool which, as the Vincent family clung together, had been reserved for Pierre. A circular piece of satin and rosewood awaited Madame Hazard in mid-floor Anton himself stood with feet widely planted on a flowery rug at the centre of this half circle On his right separated from the rest, was a sociable with two compartments facing in opposite directions. The windows were shut, the atmosphere was heavy with the smell of washed muslin and of varnish that had softened in the hot weather

Anton, remembering that Barbet acted with the merchants at Bercy on behalf of several small proprietors who were his friends, had it in his head that his brother was about to demand a partnership in Hazard and Vincent Madame Vincent suggested as an alternative that he was in debt and had come for a loan

If he had run into debt it could only be in Paris, said Bette, 'and if he had been extravagant there we should have heard of it.'

At this Victor pricked up his ears He openly admits having met Therese Despreux I can of course make the necessary inquiries I heard not long ago that she—

Oh nonsense! Bette cried in exasperation You and your system! I used to be afraid of it! I don t believe in it any more! How long is it since you told me that you could drive Barbet out and that we should have the Maison Hazard? How often did you tell me that Therese Despreux would ruin herself? Well she hasn t And now you are going to suggest that she and Barbet—nonsense, Victor! You have told me yourself that Monsieur de Courcelet is her man Do you suppose she d risk him for Barbet? For such a girl as that, Courcelet's a big fish!" Victor replied as best he could that he had not suggested that Therese—but Bette talked him down 'Don't speak to me of your precious system! There is Barbet still in possession of the Maison Hazard and all we have is the Cheval Pie "They go together!" you said Well, my poor Victor, they don t come together"

fied him with so good a business head, and Barbet, kneeling on the sociable, turned towards the door, through which at that moment Pierre was entering the room, and said·

'Good, Pierre, I'm glad you are here I was saying that this concerns Renee as well as you Now we can begin."

"Where am I to sit?" said Pierre. "Concerns Renée, does it? What has anyone to say against Renée?"

"Sit there!' Bette cried "On the stool. Sit down and don't talk."

There was a brief silence.

"I shan't keep you long," said Barbet "As you know, I have just come back from Angoulême. I have made preliminary arrangements there. I am willing to sell, Anton"

"To sell what?" Victor threw in.

'But what else?" said Barbet and returned to his brother "The Maison Hazard, of course"

Anton was without words.

"At what price?" and "Why?" Bette and Madame Vincent asked together

Barbet looked at the two ladies and began to smile because the pile of Bette's hair reminded him of Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz. "There's no question of price Each June Anton and I sign an agreement by which, if I sell at any time in the year following, I give him an option to buy at a hundred and sixty thousand francs and he accepts that as the value of the place Well, Anton?"

Anton's impulse was to accept at once. Indeed he had opened his mouth to do so when Victor interrupted him

"One moment! One moment!" he said "These matters cannot be decided in an instant"

"Why not?" asked Barbet.

"The reserves must be disclosed and valued, this year's vintage must be taken into account, there are many—"

Barbet smiled at him. "Listen, Victor—"

"Yes," said Madame Hazard, "listen, Victor Vincent If my two sons like to do a piece of business together without a middleman to take a commission—well, you may lose the pickings you have hoped for but —'

"Perhaps," Barbet answered, "but I don't picture you considering it for long."

Anton took a deep breath. "A hundred and fifty and I'll take the risk." Barbet smiled at him "A hundred and fifty-five," said Anton. Then he laughed a short, heavy laugh and held out his hand. "All right, a hundred and sixty I buy. Bette, a glass of wine"

"There is one question I should like to ask," Madame Vincent put in. "If it is not the phylloxera, what has decided Barbet to sell at this time?"

"I am expecting to be called away before long," Barbet answered. "Where I shall have to go I am not sure, but away from here certainly, and *that* is what matters"

"That," said Bette, "sounds extremely mysterious. Are you going to be married?"

"Oh no I am going on a voyage"

"And leaving your mother?" said Madame Vincent.

Madame Hazard straightened herself in her chair "You know, dear Emilie, it isn't surprising Barbet has always talked of voyages, ever since he was a little boy I thought it was nonsense then But now I *think* differently I shall go on a voyage myself"

"It isn't a question of that," exclaimed Bette, who cared nothing for Victor's disappointment but was determined to bargain. "The point is, Barbet, that your vines may be touched by the phylloxera How do we know they are not? Do we take your word for it?"

"Yes," said Barbet, "you do Do I look like a swindler?"

"And you can take my word for it too!" Pierre put in, too proud of the vines to allow them to be disparaged even by his own family.

This was a blow to the Vincents but they struggled on A hundred and sixty thousand was, they knew, a low price, but it happened also to be the first price mentioned and it was against every principle of good bargaining to accept it

"Even if it's true," said Bette, "that the vines are at present untouched, the danger remains That reduces the price"

"No, it doesn't," said Barbet

"And why not?"

"Because the price is an arranged price The danger is certainly not more than it was in June And there's another reason the reserves and the scarcity offset the risk, a hundred and sixty thousand is less than the market price And there's a third reason I am not here to bargain, I am here to sell"

Anton pushed his thumbs into his waistcoat pockets and braced himself for decision

"The trouble is, my dear Bette," he said with a smile, "you can bargain with business men, but innocent chaps like Barbet are hard as rocks. Isn't that so, Barbet?"

"Now look," said Barbet, "Victor and Bette have been wanting me to sell for years—and at this price We all know how this discussion is going to end Why waste time?"

"There will be formalities to be gone through and details to settle"

"Certainly," said Barbet

"There's the question of running the place, for instance"

"I assumed that Pierre would manage it for you That's why I said it concerned Renée"

Anton nodded "And the prison," he said. "That will have to be considered."

was dying down Therese sent the news of Paris. There had been a riot outside the offices of *Le Gaulois* and Monsieur de Courcelet was of opinion that France, in an attempt to read the Government a lesson, had overst[illegible] and returned more royalists than she had intended.

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courtyard, on the pretence of taking food to the prisoners, he [illegible], contrary to his expectation, that he missed very little the habit of life that they had represented It was as if, having made all his arrangements for a journey, he were liberated from the past For that reason he loved the present more than ever and observed the familiar scene of his countryside after the vintage more than ever closely, not with any sadness of farewell but with joy in the recurrence and endurance of this familiar life greater than his own and independent of it, which would not miss him, but continue, when he was gone, as though he had not been

The winter wheat had been sown, the vines were turning yellow, and on his way into Roussignac he would meet on the roads the old two-wheeled waggons in which the small proprietors, who had no distillery of their own, would send casks of their wine to be distilled When he was between boy and man, he had often driven these waggons himself, pleased to wear the thick tan homespun of a driver's smock, proud of the dark lines of blue or red with which it was decorated and delighted to find himself on the piece of stretched canvas, the porte faineant that was the driver's seat They belonged to November rather than to October's later days, but this year everything was early and one morning, encountering a driver he knew, Barbet drove with him into Roussignac, though he had set out to make the journey on foot

So you'll be leaving, I hear?" the driver said When Barbet had answered yes, he asked no more, but talked of his own realities, the vintage and the phylloxera, until Barbet climbed down from the waggon at the outskirts of Roussignac and set out for the Lion Rouge He had brought with him the money accumulated on account of the prisoners' upkeep and now went to Anton for more. When this was done, he visited the Protestant church, put a half of

Chapter 4

THOUGH THE FORMALITIES OF SALE AND PURchase were soon completed and the documents were ready for signature, they were not at once signed, and Anton seemed not to intend to take possession of his property until he must. What he cared for was control of the supplies and he was in no haste to make Pierre manager of the estate. So that Barbet might be tempted to stay, he was careful not to intrude upon him or his mother. "Bless you, I know the place," he said when Barbet invited him to inspect it. "I'm not buying a pig in a poke. You seem to forget that I was born there. I suppose I must take steps at headquarters to make new arrangements for the prisoners, but there's time enough for that." But he took none. As long as the prisoners remained, Barbet must remain, and to keep Barbet through the months of the distillation would have suited Anton well. "Meanwhile," he said with a casualness intended to conceal his masterly delays, "I should like to have a look at the reserves. They are what interests me."

He made a careful list of what he was shown and asked whether any more cognac was stored in the prison courtyard.

"No," said Barbet, "I thought that might be unwise."

"They sound quiet enough," Anton replied. "I haven't heard a sound of them since I came here."

"No," said Barbet, "nor have I."

He knew, however, that his time was running out. A visit by the inspector of prisons, though not as yet probable, might be made at any time. There had been no news of any of the prisoners; by now they were as safe as they would ever be, and Barbet cared little how soon discovery came. Fermentation was over, distillation had begun; October was well advanced and the chatter of the elections

was dying down. Therese sent the news of Paris. There had been a riot outside the offices of *Le Gaulois* and Monsieur de Courcelet was of opinion that France, in an attempt to read the Government a lesson, had overstepped herself and returned more royalists than she had intended. Barbet read this without interest; only when she told him of herself did his mind respond, and when he visited the courtyard, on the pretence of taking food to the prisoners, he found, contrary to his expectation, that he missed very little the habit of life that they had represented. It was as if, having made all his arrangements for a journey, he were liberated from the past. For that reason he loved the present more than ever and observed the familiar scene of his countryside after the vintage more than ever closely, not with any sadness of farewell but with joy in the recurrence and endurance of this familiar life, greater than his own and independent of it, which would not miss him but continue, when he was gone, as though he had not been.

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Chapter 4

THOUGH THE FORMALITIES OF SALE AND PURchase were soon completed and the documents were ready for signature, they were not at once signed, and Anton seemed not to intend to take possession of his property until he must. What he cared for was control of the supplies and he was in no haste to make Pierre manager of the estate. So that Barbet might be tempted to stay, he was careful not to intrude upon him or his mother. "Bless you, I know the place," he said when Barbet invited him to inspect it. "I'm not buying a pig in a poke. You seem to forget that I was born there. I suppose I must take steps at headquarters to make new arrangements for the prisoners, but there's time enough for that." But he took none. As long as the prisoners remained, Barbet must remain, and to keep Barbet through the months of the distillation would have suited Anton well. "Meanwhile," he said with a casualness intended to conceal his masterly delays, "I should like to have a look at the reserves. They are what interests me."

He made a careful list of what he was shown and asked whether any more cognac was stored in the prison courtyard.

"No," said Barbet, "I thought that might be unwise."

"They sound quiet enough," Anton replied. "I haven't heard a sound of them since I came here."

"No," said Barbet, "nor have I."

He knew, however, that his time was running out. A visit by the inspector of prisons, though not as yet probable, might be made at any time. There had been no news of any of the prisoners; by now they were as safe as they would ever be, and Barbet cared little how soon discovery came. Fermentation was over, distillation had begun; October was well advanced and the chatter of the elections

was dying down Thérese sent the news of Paris. There had been a riot outside the offices of *Le Gaulois* and Monsieur de Courcelet was of opinion that France, in an attempt to read the Government a lesson, had overstepped herself and returned more royalists than she had intended Barbet read this without interest, only when she told him of herself did his mind respond, and when he visited the courtyard, on the pretence of taking food to the prisoners, he found, contrary to his expectation, that he missed very little the habit of life that they had represented. It was as if, having made all his arrangements for a journey, he were liberated from the past For that reason he loved the present more than ever and observed the familiar scene of his countryside after the vintage more than ever closely, not with any sadness of farewell but with joy in the recurrence and endurance of this familiar life, greater than his own and independent of it, which would not miss him, but continue, when he was gone, as though he had not been

The winter wheat had been sown, the vines were turning yellow, and on his way into Roussignac he would meet on the roads the old two-wheeled waggons in which the small proprietors, who had no distillery of their own, would send casks of their wine to be distilled When he was between boy and man, he had often driven these waggons himself, pleased to wear the thick tan homespun of a driver's smock, proud of the dark lines of blue or red with which it was decorated, and delighted to find himself on the piece of stretched canvas, the porte fainéant that was the driver's seat They belonged to November rather than to October's later days, but this year everything was early, and one morning, encountering a driver he knew, Barbet drove with him into Roussignac, though he had set out to make the journey on foot

So you'll be leaving, I hear? ' the driver said When Barbet had answered yes, he asked no more, but talked of his own realities, the vintage and the phylloxera, until Barbet climbed down from the waggon at the outskirts of Roussignac and set out for the Lion Rouge. He had brought with him the money accumulated on account of the prisoners' upkeep and now went to Anton for more. When this was done, he visited the Protestant church, put a half of

what he had into the poor-box, and continued his way to Lancret's church where he left what remained As he turned to go, he saw Lancret in the doorway I hope he didn't see me put money in the poor-box, he thought It was too much, it will make him curious when he takes it out

If Lancret had seen, he said nothing of the poor-box and, with the habitual reticence of priests, showed no surprise at Barbet's presence in the church They said a few words, then went into the air and continued their conversation, each feeling that they had more to say than had yet been said and, therefore, reluctant to part.

"Are you busy?" asked Barbet

"No"

"Then let me come into your house for a little while before I begin to walk home"

They sat in the parlour, under the photographs of the popes.

"As you are going away, this may be the last of many talks we have had together," Lancret began "I am glad you asked yourself in I wished to invite you, but should not have done so Right or wrong? I don t know, but that is how I am made" Having said this, he was for a moment silent, with a silence of resolve, not of hesitation, then said "Now that you are here, it would be a form of lying not to ask the question my mind is asking " But at this point he swerved, and Barbet knew that it was Therese's name that his lips refused In a moment, he recovered himself and continued "In fact, there were two questions, but perhaps one includes the other Where are you going? They tell me you said – on a voyage'"

"I think, Barbet replied, "that I am going to prison "

The priest did not shift his gaze 'Do you wish to tell me what you have done?"

"Yes I had no intention of telling anyone, but I should like to tell you I have let my prisoners go "

"Ah, when shall I be able to say that!" Lancret exclaimed, his fingers clasping and unclasping themselves "How often is any man able to say that!" Then he smiled, a rare, wintry smile that yet had sweetness in it "And now you will go to prison yourself?"

"It seems probable"

"Even that," the priest said, 'is not freedom It is not freedom in itself You feel now that all chains have fallen from you I felt that when I entered the priesthood To enter it, seemed to me then a form of imprisonment, a voluntary imprisonment comparable with yours and acceptable because it was a way to final liberation But I have failed, Barbet. I am still in my prison I free others but I cannot free myself I knock, but the doors are not opened to me. But the time will come. Jesus is not denied in the weakness of his servants, truth does not wither because my faith is dry, some day—" He broke off suddenly and passed his hands over his face, then looked up and said in a different tone "Do you know why I am envious of you, Barbet? It is because you do not *know* what you have done. At once, when you tell me the simple fact, I compare and analyse it. Why did you let them go?"

"Because it became necessary," Barbet answered "Until you asked I had forgotten that evening I wonder why I had clean forgotten it It hasn't come back into my mind until this moment But I can tell you Certainly I can tell you I went down to the river It was last month you know—a very still September evening—and, when it became quite dark, sound began to carry further and further as it always does in September—and after a little while—" He stopped abruptly as though memory were failing him. "And after a little while—"

When you come out of prison," said Lancret, who had learned when to speak and when to listen, 'what shall you do?"

"I think I shall be a cooper," Barbet answered.

'In Paris?"

"Where the work takes me."

The priest chose his next words carefully and spoke them with reluctance 'You said to me once that you loved Therese."

'It is true,' Barbet answered. "It is natural for us to love each other when we are together and when we are apart. But our lives are independent '

Independent? Can the lives of two people who love be independent of each other? You mean that you and she will work and live independently—yes, that is possible if you both have wisdom

and patience enough But is she wise and patient?" The priest's lips smiled in an unsmiling face. "You must not forget her heredity, Barbet" The making of this little joke, and the effort it had cost, overcame him His wide-open eyes filled with tears which overflowed on an unmoving face, then, suddenly, the face was transformed by an uncontrollable seizure of grief and longing and despair He rose and turned to the wall "Even now," he cried, wrenching his body to encounter Barbet again, "even now, how contemptible a man I am! How contemptible and how selfish! If I heard that she had taken the veil, I should be satisfied—but I should be satisfied not in gladness for her vocation but because, through her, I should have absolution from my own sins While she leads the life of the flesh, my life in the flesh continues, in her sin, mine is multiplied and perpetuated, until she repents, my own spirit is incapable of full repentance" He threw up his head "And to believe that, to doubt the independence of my own redemption, is in itself a sin Sin upon sin, confusion upon confusion! What shall I do? . . Come," he said swiftly "You must leave me Until I have been on my knees, I am not fit to be any man's companion"

They went up the narrow passage together and Lancret stopped at his front door He did not hold out his hand or make any attempt to say good-bye, but stood propped against the door-post

"When you are ready," Barbet said, "you will know what to do. . . That was said to me not long ago"

"By whom?"

"It was said to me twice—by my mother, but first by Thérèse."

"By Therese" Lancret repeated I can hear her voice saying it. But she would not have said it to me"

"Perhaps it is through me that she now says it to you," Barbet answered

The priest did not at once reply "No," he said at last, "I will not deceive myself No woman would say that except to a man she loved."

There was a bleakness in this answer from which Barbet turned away, but he came back and took the priest's hands in his

"Do not be troubled for me," Lancret said. "It is true—when I

am ready, even I shall know what to do. A man in doubt must believe that or perish And after all, that promise, like every other, is in the gospel itself - 'Knock and it shall be opened unto you.' We invent new phrases and it is well that we should do so, but there is no hope that Jesus has not already given." And he added. "There is no sponge but His to hold to the lips."

Barbet walked home through the woods. He visited the stills and watched the work in progress there, then, in his own room, added a paragraph to his unfinished letter to Therese. Other letters, which said nothing of his having released his prisoners, he had sent her meanwhile, but it was to the letter which could not yet be posted that he added an account of his talk with her father This evening he finished and put it in an envelope, feeling that the time to send it was nearly come.

When this was done, he went into the kitchen and played piquet with his mother at the kitchen table while Madame Garbut prepared supper A couple of hands had been played when a trap drove up to the door

'It is Monsieur Anton," said Madame Garbut.

Barbet stirred to go out, but his mother would not be interrupted in the playing of her hand "Time enough! Time enough!" she said. 'If Anton has come to count more hogsheads, he can wait Let him find his own way in Come away from the door, Garbut."

Madame Garbut, not hearing, remained at the door "Monsieur Fricard is with him,' she said

Barbet at once laid down his cards. That Monsieur Fricard, the head of the police in Roussignac, should call at the Maison Hazard was not in itself surprising, that he should arrive in Anton's company could have but one meaning Fortunately, this did not at once occur to Madame Hazard and she greeted him warmly

A small man with hollow temples, ruddy cheeks and a thin, neatly pointed moustache, he was an infrequent but welcome visitor, for, though an official himself, he had an ingrained contempt, which Madame Hazard shared, for the whole machinery of government.

Her reasons were political, to her, administration was necessarily incompetent that was not napoleonic, to him it was contemptible because, as he never tired of saying, it was "clumsy" There did not exist in his vocabulary a stronger word of condemnation, for he himself was an orderly man, precision was his god, his collection of postage stamps, though not of great value, was set out in patterns of flawless symmetry, he darned his own linen because no one else could darn so well, whatever he used—a pen, a collar stud or an emotion—was at once put back, when he had used it, into the place where it belonged and where he could find it again, and his pleasure was to perform conjuring tricks, not with elaborate apparatus, which he scorned, but by naked sleight of hand As a young man, he had dreamed of becoming a great detective, but an unappreciative bureaucracy had ruled against him "These big-wigs in Paris," he would say, "they will never understand the *science* of detection They think only of achieving a great coup that will startle the newspapers They expect to catch fish without troubling to mind their nets Whenever, in my humble way, I have any contact with them, I discover how inaccurate they are Why, only last month—" And he would produce example after example of their follies 'Clumsy!' he would say All thumbs! No nicety in their methods No science. No system"

This evening, walking in behind Anton from the early twilight, he was evidently in a state of extreme embarrassment, for, though he greeted Madame Hazard he had none of his little jokes for her, and, while Barbet was persuading the newly lit lamp to draw, fell back into the shadows There, at some distance from the table, he found a chair and seated himself upon it with the special drooping melancholy of a man, naturally cheerful and talkative, who finds himself in circumstances that forbid his talent Anton in answer to his mother s question, had begun to say no he hadn t come to count the reserves that was done in any case he hadn t come about anything connected with his purchase of the Maison Hazard, in that matter, he was perfectly satisfied His rotund phrases his jocular avoidances, might have gone on for ever, and Monsieur Fricard began to wriggle in his chair

"Well, Anton," said Madame Hazard, "come to the point. What is it you want?"

"It is foolish, a little mistake, a matter of no importance at all," Monsieur Fricard said in a voice so shyly apologetic that no attention was paid to his words. Anton continued to explain that sometimes, in life, little confusions arose, little misunderstandings sprang up, which in his opinion it was always best to remove at once—

"But I said that, if only we waited until the morning," Monsieur Fricard put in, "they would have discovered their mistake for themselves and—"

"At once," said Anton firmly

"Very well," said Monsieur Fricard, "as you please. But I know how inaccurate they can be If only we could wait until—"

"Now, now, now!" Madame Hazard cried "One of you trumpets like an elephant, the other squeaks like a mouse, and there's no sense in either One might suppose that someone had committed a crime."

Was it possible, Barbet wondered, that, even now, she had not guessed why they were come? Was Monsieur Fricard still, to her, the polite little man who chattered pleasantly about the bureaucracy and did conjuring tricks for her entertainment? Did it not enter her mind that he was here now as a policeman? Or did she know this and was she playing an elaborate defence? He watched her face and Anton's, in the ring of lamplight at the table, as though his personal fortunes were not included in the scene, and saw, beyond the ring, the dimmer rectangle of Monsieur Fricard's brow and cheeks, and, as he watched and listened to their voices, not his lips, not his mind only, but the very spirit within him began to smile because their circumstances and his own were incongruous with the peace in his heart.

"But these fellows in Paris," Fricard was saying "Really, one can't help laughing at them The mistakes they make! The bungles! They are like some juggler at a fair who lets everything slip through his fingers. And why? Why, I ask you? They have brains, they have resources, sometimes they have even imagination—but they

doubt, was an associate of Marcotte s He would know some of his characteristics—the spectacles, for example.'

'The spectacles?' said Barbet.

Isn t it true, Anton demanded that you once told me you had a pair of spectacles made for him in Angoulême?'

"Certainly I did But what happened in Paris?

Well, as I understand it, this man as soon as he had claimed to be Marcotte—"

Of course, as always when anything comes from Paris, we haven t been told the whole story said Monsieur Fricard interven ing in a tone of authority but if one has a little intelligence, one can put two and two together and what seems to have happened is this At first at any rate, they didn t believe him they knew Mar cotte was safe in prison here and as they had no charge against the old chap they told him to be off At that he changed his tune He wouldn t go He said he had a *right* to be in prison He demanded arrest. For what? said they For being an escaped prisoner said he. Pooh, said they be off with you and don t waste our time. And then he complained about his spectacles How could he earn his living? He couldn t see. His own spectacles, he said, had been broken in the prison those he had were of no use for fine work and anyhow he had no chisels, no knives, no tools. How could he earn his living? There were still months of his sentence to run. He was entitled to live at the expense of the State. He was entitled to his spectacles He hadn t escaped from prison he had been turned out against his will And so on And so on It seems to have im pressed them Is he mad or is he Marcotte? is what they want to know

He is Marcotte, said Barbet and he could have given no an swer more certain to convince his brother that Marcotte was safely in his cell It was Anton who had been suspicious who had taken alarm, who had insisted to the sceptical Fricard that they should not wait for the morning but go to the Maison Hazard at once. Perhaps Marcotte had escaped and Barbet had been afraid to confess it? Perhaps this was the meaning of Barbet s "voyage' and of his deci sion to sell the Maison Hazard? And yet Barbet had taken the

money for all the prisoners' upkeep and Barbet was not dishonest. Anton had swerved, doubted, suspected, and suddenly, almost in a panic of suspicion, had decided that at all costs he and Fricard must satisfy themselves of the truth. Now, confronted with the truth by Barbet himself, he shied at it violently, fearing that Barbet was leading him on, was laughing at him, and that in a moment Fricard too would be laughing at him as a credulous fool. To prove his worldly wisdom and that he was not being duped, he laughed himself, strode across the room and clapped his brother heartily on the shoulder.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "Very good! So Marcotte is in Paris and his supper is here! You won't catch me as easily as that, Barbet."

Madame Hazard, with swift guile, saw how the wind had changed and set her sails to it.

"Now, Anton, what was it put that idea into your head? If Marcotte had escaped—" She too began to laugh and seized Barbet's hand and patted it. "Come along," she said, "take them their supper, Barbet." Then to Fricard: "Now, my friend, tell me how many are there who know of this? You and Anton. Any others?"

"None," said Fricard.

"Good, good. Garbut is deaf. Stone deaf. She has heard nothing. We don't want Anton made a laughing stock. And now, both of you, draw up to the table."

"That is extremely odd," said Barbet. "But the world itself is extremely odd. Don't you believe, Anton, that the man in Paris is Marcotte?"

"No," Anton replied with a grin. "I do not."

"Bless me," said Barbet, "how shall I persuade you? How does one persuade a man to believe the truth?" His mother tried to interrupt him. "No, mother," he said, "have you forgotten? We are going on a voyage, you and I?"

Her composure had left her; the light of fanaticism burned in her eye as it had in the days in which she had believed her son to have the power of miracles. She could think only that he was threatened, that the remote terrors of the law had come into her own home, that he must be protected from them, and she began to patter to and fro with short, quick steps, now clinging to his arm, now

pressing her hands together, her lips moving silently in prayer for those fires of heaven which she expected to descend At sight of her, the bristles of Anton's misgiving rose again.

"Come and see," said Barbet. "You will not find Marcotte in the courtyard Come and see for yourselves."

The lamp was lighted and slung over Barbet's arm As Anton and Fricard were about to follow him into the covered way, and Madame Hazard, standing beside the kitchen table, covered her face with her hands, Madame Garbut, unaware of all that had happened, came forward with the pot containing the prisoners' supper Rather than argue with her, Barbet smiled and took it

"Allow me," said Fricard, "you will need to have your hands free for the keys."

At the door to the courtyard Anton said, "Do you go in unarmed?" and Barbet, rather than argue with him, replied, "Very well, Anton, you take the pistol"

They went in order Anton with the pistol, Fricard with the supper, Barbet with the lamp In the failing light, the courtyard seemed wide and bleak

"Look," said Anton, 'this is beyond a joke What did you mean when you said that man in Paris was Marcotte?"

Without replying, Barbet went ahead of them until the cells could be seen plainly Then he stopped

"You had better satisfy yourselves. All the doors are unlocked"

Anton and Fricard went from cell to cell and returned, but still Anton feared a trick or hoped for it.

"Where have you put them, Barbet? What are you up to?"

"They are all gone," Barbet said.

"All?"

"All."

'My God, do you mean you let them go? Are you mad?"

"Now, now," said Fricard nervously, holding the pot before him, 'let me put this down while we discuss the position like reasonable men There is, of course, a misunderstanding I think we must put joking aside. I think the time has come at which you should explain to us—"

BOOK FIVE

The Voyage Begins

Heureux qui, comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage . . .

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

Chapter 1

THE NEWS OF BARBET'S ARREST WAS BROUGHT TO Therese by Courcelet Her engagement at the Divertissements was ended, her return to a glorified Écurie was announced for the first week of December, and she had spent the afternoon in rehearsing old and new songs with Templeraud who, having begun to tire of Annette, was light heartedly preparing for a new campaign Therese felt that she was invulnerable, neither Templeraud departing an hour ago nor Philippe de Courcelet arriving now had power to disturb her Glad that Etienne was not professionally lost to her and that her affection for Courcelet had matured, she was comforted, and a little surprised by her self possession

Courcelet, when she had admitted him, sat down with her in front of Het Vaderland

"It is the most comfortable stove in Paris,' he said

This delighted her she loved to have her possessions praised, but as it was a form of flattery that he seldom used, it stirred her suspicions and she said Of course it is! It is mine. I chose it But that is not what you have come to say?

No he admitted, it isn t I have bad news, Therese"

He was fumbling in his breast pocket for a neatly folded copy of a newspaper She held out her hand for it and began to read the column he had marked

"How did you come by this? Do you subscribe to the press of Cognac?

Never mind said he It is my business to be informed '

She read in silence.

They seem to consider it a joke, ' said Courcelet.

"Ah! she cried, so it is! And more than a joke Don't you see

foolish and useless, I will give it up Then, if you like, I will sit about, wringing my hands and pitying Barbet, but not until then"

"I don't picture you wringing your hands, Therese, it is not one of your gestures"

"But you thought me heartless? Just now, when I spoke of my songs?"

"Well—"

"Yes," she said, laying her hand on his arm, "you did People do I am not heartless. I am active Why should I sit here for ten minutes, moaning and wailing, and *afterwards* begin to think of what might be done? I miss out a step, that is all Is that callous? It is the callousness of a general who knows when to counter-attack."

Courcelet, smiling, mocked her with one of her best loved rhymes

"'Bon, bon,
Napoléon,
Va rentrer dans sa maison!'"

"Precisely!" said she. "Now, tell me Give your mind to this. It will take a long time to put Barbet into prison—first one examination, then another—I know nothing about legal processes except that they last for ever That is the first point The second is that at heart the public is always on the side of prisoners who escape, unless they have a particular reason for hating the prisoner, and this man, Marcotte, with his story of his spectacles and his model boat is already half way to being patted on the back as if he were a schoolboy who had run away from his lessons—and Barbet is the schoolmaster who had the grace to wink And not only that," she continued, "—and this part ought to interest you, Philippe, as a student of human nature You may say—and it's true—that we French are a logical, unsentimental people, but isn't it true also that just because, hour by hour and day by day, we are logical and unsentimental, and because, at the same time, we are at root Catholic, and because, still at the same time, we are the children of Voltaire, we love a—well, what shall I call it?—we love and we worship a sudden and complete topsy turvydom, a—"

"A comic and a holy paradox," said Courcelet

Anything, my dear Philippe, to avoid inconvenience—that is your realism. What does it matter, you are thinking, if Barbet goes to prison for a few months?"

No, Therèse, I'm sorry for him I like him But life isn't a comic paradox. Things must take their course. Anyhow," he added, "what is the good of running your head against a wall? Whether you like it or not, whether the Government likes it or not, however much sympathy may be aroused, things will take their course He will go to prison. What then? The whole thing will peter out"

For a moment Therese hesitated, for she valued Courcelet's judgment.

'I expect you are right in the single fact," she said "He will go to prison But what you don't see is that his going to prison is the one thing needed The thing won't peter out then I won't let it It is when the key turns on him that it will really begin I have a song ready for that"

"A new song? So soon? You are quick, Thérèse," he answered with a sceptical smile

"No," she said, "an old song So old that all France knows it already Change a few words and it becomes a revolutionary song Have you forgotten Royan? I thought of it there I have never used it. Thank God, I have never used it! I can now—with Barbet in prison Listen," she exclaimed, her eyes alight "This is just a sketch of it, but—listen

"Au clair de la lune
Mon ami Barbet
Grevy prends ta plume
Pour sa liberte

Do you see?" she cried "We can improve on that. But I have the end—

"Sa chandelle est morte,
Il n'a plus de feu
Ouvre-lui sa porte
Pour l'amour de Dieu"

"Well?" said Thérèse "If that is true, is my plan unreasonable? In Paris, Barbet is already a name to conjure with The story will grow The whole press will take fire" She touched the newspaper "Look, it has begun . And as the lawyers argue and argue, no one will talk of anything else or laugh at anything else but the absurd solemnity of the people who are trying to put the comic paradox into prison And I," she added, "shall have a new programme for the Écurie The whole of France shall sing my songs! Now tell me, tell me honestly, is that fantastic and impossible?"

"It is fantastic," Courcelet answered, "but by no means impossible Nothing is impossible in France under the presidency of Monsieur Grevy. A few parades, a few music-hall songs, a handsome face, a martial air and—who knows?—any paltry general might execute a coup d'état No politician with his ear to the ground can rule out the possibility of that And if the music-halls can overthrow the Republic, I should be a rash man to say that Therese Despreux cannot make it appear dangerously ridiculous to put Barbet into prison for having let the others out Nevertheless," he said, "I think it would be unwise to make the attempt"

"For my own sake?"

"Not only for your own sake, but because, though it is not impossible that *you should succeed, it is probable that you will fail* Oh yes, you can make the lawyers and even the Government look foolish—I don't doubt that, but you won't keep Barbet out of prison You forget one factor—the money" Courcelet spread out his hands "Probably there's an explanation of that Still—he continued to draw it I dare say you can make the authorities wish to let Barbet go I dare say you can make them wish with all their hearts that he didn't exist But the more you mock them, the more it will become a matter of prestige, and prestige in governments is like pride in men—it makes them hang themselves in their own rules You may do the Government harm which isn't your purpose, but you won't save Barbet from prison, which is Be a realist, Thérèse"

"How you respect governments!" said she

"I? Respect the Government? I?"

"Not 'the Government,'" she answered, "but government as such.

the story being transformed into a tale that Barbet had seen Héloïse and Abélard in a vision Schnetz, being asked whether he also had seen the visionary figures, answered 'No Why should I? I am not a saint," and his answer went the round of the clubs and became a headline. He worked untiringly and with an optimism more assured than Therese's own. "Even the lawyers," said he, "are not mad. They will find a means to acquit him.' His overriding confidence persuaded all he knew that, in supporting Barbet, they were backing a winner Acquittal became for him an article of faith "Don t talk to me,' he said 'I *know*'

After three months of doubt, the day came that proved him wrong Barbet was sentenced in mid February That night, at the Écume, Thérese sang none of the new songs introduced since his arrest but reverted to the old ones that he had made for her At the end, it was the audience that compelled her to Au clair de la lune," but she would not sing her own words to it She shook her head and shook her head and when there was silence, she said

Forgive me The battle is not over But I dare not sing the new words to-night

She had meant only that she could not trust herself to sing them, but the audience interpreted her differently, there was a turning of heads, a scrutiny of unfamiliar faces the room was swept by rumor that Therese Despreux had been threatened by the police. At first she knew only that the mood of her audience was changed, she felt their anger while doubtful of its cause, then understood and used it.

I *dare* not sing the new words to-night. Barbet must be allowed to sleep quietly in his prison and Monsieur Grevy at the Élysee" Then she smiled After all, the old words have the same tune"

They obeyed her and sang as if they were singing a conspirators' hymn Outside the Écume a crowd gathered round her as she left the building determined that the police should not touch her, a crowd that increased continually, flowing in from the side streets as she drove to Maubant s under escort. Far down the street she heard them singing

head that I am entitled to special exemption—a kind of spiritual exemption I have never claimed and don't feel the least claim to anything of the kind My story isn t some miraculous legend the newspapers puff it up into nonsense I m not in the least a sublime fool or The Simpleton of Roussignac.' All I am is a good vine grower and a man who hates to be attached to anything—tied to it, I mean, by ties that he makes for himself To be tied by force, by other people—to be in prison even, is still to be free The terrible thing is to let chains grow in one s own mind—not to be able to walk out of a room though all the doors are open. And if there s anything odd about me it is that I don t grow chains for myself and I do walk out if the doors are open Hatred and fear are chains, I was beginning to hate and fear Blachere so I let myself out At the time, I confess there wasn t much reasoning about it. It seemed to happen—as you said once—like waking in the sun But I have been made to think about it since then They ask me so often why I did it, and when I tell them the truth they won't believe it But you will. If they put me in prison don t be disappointed or troubled When I put myself in prison it will be time enough for you to pity me.

Do you understand that?" Courcelet asked when she had finished reading

Certainly Don t you?'

I understand it, of course with my mind. But I don't feel it I don t know what it feels like to be an unattached human being How for example can a man love and yet not be tied to his love by chains of his own making? Or is this the answer—that we are tied only by our appetites, by what we desire to consume and possess? Is that why men who love God say not only that th y are unfettered by their love but that their love is itself freedom? It is an interesting speculation and I suppose the reason for my being unable to discover any answer is precisely that it is to me only a speculation. And to you Therese?

"Go on talking she said. It amuses you and it amuses me."

"Ouvre-lui sa porte
Pour l'amour de Dieu"

On the way home, she called upon Courcelet at the Palais Royal Never before had she thus disturbed him, but he had been out of Paris in January, she had not seen him since his return and to-night, flushed with the sensation of victory though it was to-day that Barbet had gone to prison, she felt that she must at all costs see Courcelet before she slept He would tell her whether she was standing on her head or her heels

He renewed his fire and stood beside it in his dressing-gown while she told him what had passed

"What will happen, Philippe? That mob was roused You would have felt it if you had been there Have I done well? Do you say 'Good, Therèse'?"

"You have fought magnificently," he answered "But you have failed"

"Is that failure? To have Paris shouting in the streets?"

"Barbet is in prison"

"Yes, yes, you were right But I too was right The story doesn't end here This is where it begins What will happen now?"

"Poor Thérèse It will peter out I know the mob of Paris They are like champagne, the fizz goes off Poor Barbet"

"It may be 'poor Thérèse' Certainly it isn't 'poor Barbet' He is worth more than that Oh dear,' she said, "how odd it is! I suppose I am doing all this for myself He doesn't see himself as a persecuted hero or as a visionary or a worker of miracles I have had letters from him, you know There was one written a week ago in which he said—listen, I have it here, I carried it about to show you" She took it out and held it to the lamp "He says 'What I am told is happening in Paris surprises me I am very grateful to you, Thérèse No one wants to go to prison and in that I am like everyone else But if I do go to prison, it won't *matter* Don't imagine what isn't true My mother, who seemed once to have become free in her mind, has returned to her delusion that to put me into prison is different from putting other men there She has it in her

culties and of severity against her transgressions which gave her, at the same time, the sensations of being free and of he ... If she was disobedient whe ... ed

... or

... than most men, for a part ... an with hers, but that she should be so long content with suppers, drives, conversations and chastity puzzled him. They were what he liked, what he needed, what he was capable of, but, aware of their inadequacy to so young a girl, he exercised himself to provide charming compensations. It astonished him that they sufficed. What was she playing for? Marriage? Or were her own passions becoming quieter?

He determined to ask her, not only because he wanted to know but because he had found that such direct challenges were a whet to conversation, and one evening towards the end of May he went to the Écurie and watched her performance with the thought in his mind that, when he and she were alone, he would say: Why aren't you bored with me, Therese? Why don't you want younger men? At first she would answer that men of his age pleased her, then that he was a selective connoisseur, then that no one she knew could talk as well as he—all the replies of flattery and convenience, but at last, because she was Therese, she would tell the truth.

He went to the Écurie alone. Was it because he was critical in solitude or because he had heard them so often that her Barbet songs seemed to him to have become stale? The audience was rapturous, but this he was inclined to attribute to her prestige. Not to applaud the Despreux was to confess oneself a fool, and certainly he himself applauded—the Petits Chevaux in particular, for in these monologues her voice, her attack, her characterization of the unseen players delighted him, and the old songs—the song of the soldier on the march and the country girl's comment on cities—filled him with warm memories of the early days when she was less famous. But the songs about Barbet—well, satire at the expense of the Government fell flat when the occasion of it was past, and, for him, all the songs about Barbet, and not only those composed after his arrest, were, in effect, satire against the Government. How deep

Let's not talk of it," she answered. "Here's a May evening and an open carriage. Aren't you glad for once that I work in Montmartre and live in the Ile St. Louis?"

He was so glad, so proud to be at her side, that he wished to prolong the evening and urged her to sup out with him She shook her head.

Are you tired, my darling?"

"Tired? No You always ask me if I am tired when I don't want to do what you suggest There's supper at home. I want to sup in the window and watch the river"

He acquiesced, and, when they were in her flat, he said "I have no need to be early to-morrow"

"Which means you will stay? Good We can talk at leisure—or not talk, as you please I shall undress before supper Open a bottle meanwhile"

A door between the two rooms stood open She walked to and fro while she undressed. When two glasses of Montrachet had been poured out, she paused at the table to drink

"Listen, he said, I have something serious to say"

In these clothes?"

"Why not?

She made her gesture of obedience What I like about you," she said "is that you have a sense of the incongruous" She carried her glass with her and lay upon the sofa Well what have I done?"

He told her that, in his opinion, the Barbet songs had had their day

Did the audience think so?

You have great prestige"

"By which you mean that the applause was a compliment to me? That they are tired of the songs? Now, listen Did they applaud the Barbet songs less than the others or less than the Petits Chevaux? Did they? You see, you are talking nonsense. I will not have you interfering I will not have you interfering with my work. Anything else—yes My work—no

"You have said that before, Therèse, and have agreed afterwards that my judgment was good"

was Therese's interest in him? Why, though the songs should have been long ago out of fashion, did she so evidently put her heart into them? Bless my soul, thought Courcelet, when he let out his prisoners and all France was chattering of it, the joke was good, but hasn't he by now been in prison long enough to be forgotten?

On the way home in her carriage he decided that the moment had not come to speak of what was in his mind She was in no mood to accept criticism She was proud because the fête in the Tuileries gardens, the torchlight processions, the spahis in their great cloaks, had not affected audiences at the Écurie Nor has the war," she said "By the way, how is the war?"

"What war?"

"Phaleron Bay The Greeks

"Oh," said he with a smile, the Greeks! C'est arrangé là bas, c'est fini Why did you take all that so seriously, Therèse? Tonkin, too You were always fussing about Tonkin"

"War's a mess,' she answered 'Poor devils When they come back, you give them ribbons And I stay here singing my pieces."

'Have you renewed your contract with Plence?"

'No'

'I thought that was to be done to night"

"He brought it again"

"Well?'

"I didn t sign

"But, my dear Therese, surely time is running short Your present contract has only a few days to run I can understand your wanting a break, but he must be allowed to know what your intentions are If you won t sign for the future, he may engage someone else."

'*I have told him he can if he likes.* I have told him I mean to take a holiday'

"In June? Certainly But a holiday with a contract at the end of it You can have what salary you like"

"I have told you and I have told him," she exclaimed, turning in her seat, "that it isn't a question of salary I am going to take a holiday without a contract at the end of it"

'But why?"

care whether your ridiculous Government stands or falls. Which are stale?"

How much this swift decision cost her, Courcelet knew, for as she flung her question at him she rose with tears of rebellion in her eyes and thrust past him on her way to the bedroom To have clung to the songs would have been to obey her sentiment to reject them was, she now believed a part of her integrity, and Courcelet was wise enough not to console her He counted on his fingers the songs that were to be condemned and called their names through the communicating door She received them in silence

Out of this silence she asked unexpectedly Do you think we outgrow things?

He tapped out a cigarette just lighted and his expression hardened As one grows older— he began but before he could continue she was out of the bedroom her unfastened wrap afloat behind her naked body and had twined her arms round him

"I didn t mean that I didn t mean you I wasn t talking about that at all How often am I to tell you that you can do or not do what you please? Come to supper

"Then what did you mean? he asked Yourself?

"Myself? For an instant she was puzzled. 'Oh I haven t outgrown desire, f that s what you re thinking of I should be a dull mistress if I had For example I shouldn t have run in with my dressing gown flying should I?

Perhaps you hadn t time to fasten it

No my dear but just time to unfasten it Was it a good entrance?

He was enchanted and took her hand. What is it, then, that you have outgrown?

I m not sure, she replied beginning to eat her supper Not my appetite anyway But it was interesting you know Six months ago I should have been outrageously proud of having had the will to drop those songs. They d have been a glorious sacrifice to my divine ambition! Nothing personal counts. Nothing personal counts —it has been a watchword for me. And to-night—oh, it s nonsense.

Chapter 3

HIS SUCCESS IN PERSUADING THERESE TO DROP many of the songs that she and Templéraud had devised on the subject of Barbet had been enough for Courcelet that evening He had learned that it was unwise to follow up a victory over Thérese To remind her that she had yielded in anything was to provoke her to recant. After each shaking, her self will must be given time to re-settle.

He had, therefore, surrendered himself to the delights of her company, but three days later, having taken her to drive with him in the Bois, where his friends might enviously remark his privilege, he led the conversation towards the subject of his curiosity, her failure to renew with Plence the contract that would expire to-night, her reluctance to sacrifice the Barbet songs, and her surprising constancy to himself On the evening of the dressing gown—it was by such visual incidents that he labelled his evenings with Therese—he had for a moment cautiously approached the third and the most important of these problems, but she had instantly produced cards and threatened him with piquet. She could scarcely suggest piquet in the Bois and he began again to send out his analytical scouts.

She would say no more of Plence than that she wished her existing contract to lapse before she signed another Why? Because she wanted, for a time at any rate, to be free "As I walk out of the Ecurie this evening, I want to be able to say to myself perhaps I shall never come here again '

"A charming pretence,' said Courcelet.

"Pretence?"

Surely?"

of course, I'm as ambitious as ever or I shouldn't have consented You have no idea what those songs stood for in my mind I thought I could rouse Paris with them I thought I could *make* the Govern ment let him go But you're right, they are going stale, if I went on with them, they would begin to damage my performance Very well, *I drop them, and Barbet can stay in prison But in there,* while I was reaching for this wrap across the foot of the bed, I was sud denly *not* proud of myself I used to feel the hell of a great woman when I was ruthlessly ambitious To night—"

"To be, in your own line, the greatest performer in Paris—isn't that something?"

"Good God," she replied, "of course it is For me—"

"Everything?"

She was silent

"That is what you were going to say?"

She nodded and laid down her knife and fork

"Then why not say it? *Isn't it true?*"

"Oh yes, it's true," she answered "For a moment I wished it wasn't That's all"

"But Therese—"

"'For a moment,' I said! Don't argue The moment is past"

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Pretence?"

"Surely?"

"Don't be so sure!"

He shrugged his shoulders. "You will be telling me next that the Despreux is giving up the stage."

"And if I were to say that?"

The question alarmed him. "I should say you were a fool."

"Why a fool? Is it the best of all lives, do you suppose, to be a singer in café concert?"

"For you, yes. It is the life you have chosen. It is the life to which you have trained yourself. What is *more*—you can *do* it better than anyone else. I know, my dear," he added more gently, "that from time to time everyone, whatever his profession, grows tired of it, but—"

"'Tired! Tired!' Every man has a word of his own. Even Barbet had. 'To-morrow!' was his word until I taught him 'to-day.' Your word is 'tired.' I'm not tired. Why can't I be free even for a few weeks? I want to feel that, if I want to, I can go on a voyage. I don't say I'm going to. I want to feel I *can*!"

"Very well," said Courcelet, "as long as you don't. I dare say that sometimes the routine of your life is tedious to you—"

"It's not tedious!" she exclaimed. "Tired! Tedious! What words!"

"I dare say," he persisted with irritated patience, "that sometimes your life is tedious to you. No doubt you have dreams of becoming something altogether different. We all do. I imagine that some day I shall give up politics and write history—history was my passion when I was a young man—but I shan't. Why? Not because the man inside me is changed. Not because I love history less. But just as the way one lives marks the face, so it marks the mind and harnesses the will."

"You mean that no voyages are possible?"

"Voyages?"

To avoid the question, she slipped her hand into his arm.

"I'm sorry," she said. "I snapped at you."

He patted her glove. "There's a penance for that."

"I know."

"But this time," he continued, "the penance isn't what you think."

'What is it, then?'

"To continue our conversation where you broke it off What did you mean by 'voyages'?"

"I wonder whether I can tell you that," she answered, "—tell it, I mean, in a way you would understand? A 'voyage'—it's not my word, you know, it's Barbet s—a 'voyage' is—"

'Escape?' he prompted

"No. That's what people always say Was Columbus 'escaping'?"

"Ah, so you're going to discover a new world?"

"Why not?'

Because the only voyage to a new world that would suit you, Therese, is a tour in New York You are almost famous enough"

She was stung by the 'almost.' "I have already been offered that!'

Have you? Wasn't the salary high enough?"

"Why do you think that's all I care for? Why *should* you think it?"

He shrugged his shoulders. 'I m not accusing you of being mercenary I say only that you are a professional actress If you imagine you can be anything else, you are deluding yourself—that's all. Marie Antoinette playing at being a milkmaid

"You are wrong ' she said ' You think you are right because I play my part so well I had no heaven sent vocation for the stage, but I was alive, I had talent, I wasn't going to rot in Roussignac all my life or sell hats in Angouleme I had to get *out*—and the stage was my way out First I put up my own stage in the garden of the Cheval Pie, then I climbed on to it, and *after that* I invented the heaven sent vocation. Do you understand that?'

'But—'voyages ?' said Courcelet. "You're wandering from the point '

'I m not I m coming to it I hypnotized myself, you have to, if you re going to the top" She turned on him "That s where

you fail, my poor Philippe You didn't hypnotize yourself, still you are partly a historian, partly a connoisseur, always slightly despising your own job, that's why you are not président du conseil That's no good to me Whatever the council is, I'll be president of it That means self-hypnotism People of my sort are like a chicken with its nose on a line of chalk, so was Bonaparte, so was Balzac You look about you and criticize the landscape, you don't get anywhere, we do We stay on the track and we're happy as long as we keep our noses down, but if we look up—"

"Doesn't the landscape please you?"

"That may be," she answered "But the spell is broken The hypnotism doesn't work any more. If we look up, we see the white line as what it is—a track, an obsession Then one of two things happens A giant—Balzac—goes on, he substitutes a deliberate, undeluded will for the obsession, and he goes on That is a great artist I'm not that I can go on, probably I shall, and I shan't despise my job—I shan't be *tired* of it, it won't be tedious to me, you can get that out of your head—but I shan't be hypnotized any more, *I shall never be able to re hypnotize myself as Balzac did—as the giants always do when they come up from the chalk line* But there's one other thing I might do I might break away from the chalk line altogether That's the meaning of a voyage—not to be earth bound, not to be stage-bound or money-bound, not to be *bound* to anything"

"My dear, everyone thinks at one time or another that they could buy salvation for the price of a ticket to Tahiti Unfortunately, when they get there, the same soul comes out of their valise"

"Look," she said, "*I want you to understand this I really want you to understand it I'm not* a vague dreamer I'm a professional actress. I know that as well as you But I am by one degree more realistic than you are, and I'm not stage struck any more It was a drug, I'm cured of it—*as* a drug, that's all I can do without it There have always been other ways in which I might have lived but I'd forgotten it Now I know it again My nose is up *from the* chalk line That's what a voyage is *And don't imagine* that I am not capable of it."

"Dear Therèse, you are capable of anything—but not, I think, alone?"

"By which you mean?"

"Only that the companion of your voyage will have the devil of a time when you grow tired of it Have you thought of that? One ought not to share one's St. Helena."

"Oh," she said with a sigh, "you know how to be cruel, don't you?"

The horses were being rested in the shade. Nothing pleased Courcelet better than to sit with Therèse in a carriage drawn up by the roadside so that all who passed might see him on his throne. To be still, to be near her, to draw off his gloves, and feel the warmth of the carriage-cushion under his hand, to smell the leather and the horses, to hear wheels bowling past him and see the glitter of their spokes, filled him with a sense of well being, for he was afraid of death, of its cold exile—as he understood it—from the pleasures of a connoisseur, and often would sit still for a long time, thinking only I am alive. I am still alive And Therese filled him not only with a sense of life but with a sense of power A docile woman bored him A reserved, aristocratic woman appealed, if at all, only to his intellect. Therese was wilful, intractable, like a vicious mare, but she played her game by the rules understood between them In the last resort, he was master She would die in argument rather than surrender her opinion, but, commanded, she would obey, and now, though she was silent, neglecting his question, he was content to warm himself in the enchanting miracle of her known obedience. If he said Therese, I want to drive home alone, she would make her little gesture of acquiescence—an outward movement of her palm—and leave the carriage

Instead, he ordered the coachman to drive on and watched the sway of her body at the jerk of the traces. The horses' pace was quickened Trees and grass and little knots of people flashed past Therese leaned forward, then swung round in her seat, having recognized a friend.

Stop," she cried, "stop," and raised herself, perilously swaying

The carriage drew up "I'll get out Wait for me here No, no, I should never catch up Turn the horses Drive slowly back"

But all her vigilance could not re-discover the figure she had recognized

"Very well," she said at last "It's hopeless. Drive on again"

After a little while she looked at Courcelet "Don't you want to know who it was I saw?"

"Not if it's another abandoned lover produced from the sleeve of your inexhaustible memory"

"My poor Philippe! The sleeve's empty I've told you about them all"

"Good"

"This wasn't a lover It wasn't even a man It was an old woman I thought she was Madame Vincent"

"Vincent?"

"I have told you about her Quotations run in her head Anyhow, they did, though I'm told she's less sure of them nowadays. You remember? A friend of Madame Hazard"

Courcelet, to whom Victor's name was familiar in his list of agents and who had long known that Madame Hazard had come up from Roussignac, thought swiftly

"It's not impossible," he admitted "Madame Hazard is in Paris, of course"

"*She* is in Paris! How do you know?"

"I *know everything* I supposed that you did In fact, she has been bothering everyone who's fool enough to see her She's mad, I believe—or near enough"

"In what way?"

"A saint has been imprisoned She is the mother of the saint . But interesting I saw her myself as a matter of curiosity She says that the Republic will fall, that the Emperor will return—though whether it's to be the first or only Napoleon le Petit seems not to matter, and whether he is coming back to rescue her son or deliver the vines from the phylloxera she seems not to know Anyhow she swears that the only way to save the Republic is to let Barbet loose."

"My God," said Therese, "I believe that even I have more heart than you. What did you do—laugh at her?"

"I was extremely courteous."

"I have no doubt you were. And where is she now?"

"That I don't know"

"Of course you do—or can find out."

"She came first to the Hôtel Bagnolet, but moved into the suburbs. I will have inquiries made if you wish it"

"Why didn't you tell me of this before?"

"My dear Therese, if you will forgive me for saying so, I have heard enough of the precious Barbet without going out of my way to remind you of him. You have dramatized the whole thing Men have been to prison before."

"That's not the point."

"What is the point, then? You're not in love with him?"

After a momentary hesitation, she replied "No I'm not *in love* with anyone And that, perhaps, is the answer to the question which is always in your mind—that explains the chastity which you find so astonishing It has always been my habit to be in love with someone and—"

"A cheapening of the great passion, the romantics would say," Courcelet put in

"I am not speaking of the great passion I didn't say it was my habit to love someone but to be in love with someone"

"Is there a difference, except of phrase? I thought you were a realist, Therese, not a metaphysician Very well, I accept your distinction for the purposes of argument"

"I am not arguing," she replied. "I am telling you. You asked whether I was in love with Barbet—"

"Very well, I amend my question Do you love him?"

"That is a question I won't ask myself for your entertainment"

"Then I will ask another question Are you still my mistress?"

"Have I yet refused you? Until this afternoon you have never bored me. And you are not exacting, my dear Philippe."

"Until this afternoon, you have never insulted me."

"If that is what you think, you can punish me," she said. "That will be a consolation. But perhaps not? I had better ask you a question: am I your mistress still?"

He nodded as he did when a waiter submitted a dish for his approval before serving it.

"Then you will get me Madame Hazard's address?"

"Certainly."

"It is remarkable," she said, "how well we understand each other—you and I. I wonder sometimes whether we shall ever be able to part. Nothing is so important as to be able to quarrel with lucidity."

That evening, her last at the Écurie, she shook her head again at Plence's offer of another contract, and, refusing all escort, looked forward to driving home alone. At the door, as she was about to enter her carriage, she saw, among the crowd on the pavement, Madame Vincent's face. She halted and asked those who were pressing upon her to make way. Madame Vincent was evidently exhausted and her mantle crushed by the pressure of the crowd. Thérèse took her hand.

"I will drive you home. We can talk in the carriage."

The old lady had expected a long country welcome as though they were meeting ouside the Lion Rouge in Roussignac, but she understood what was required of her and at once behaved as if to drive away from the Écurie in the Despreux's carriage were, for her, a habit—certainly a right. She sat erect in her place and composed her long, heavy features in an expression of authority. When the wheels began to turn and the throng on the pavement to wave and shout good night, she shared in Thérèse's acknowledgments, raising her left shoulder, tucking her jaw-bone into it, and tilting her head sideways like a gaunt bird.

"Tell me," said Thérèse, "where is Madame Hazard?"

But Madame Vincent had a story to tell and would tell it in her own way.

"At Vanves," she replied and, before she could be interrupted: "I saw you in the Bois, Thérèse."

"I saw you. *At least* I thought I did. But when I turned the carriage, there wasn't a sign. Where had you gone?"

Madame Vincent had concealed herself. "I was at the kiosk, but I kept my back turned" She admitted it with rigid solemnity; then paraded her reasons in order In the first place, Thérèse had not been alone, in the second—and this was sternly said—the old gentleman in the carriage had seemed to be of the type which—"well," said Madame Vincent, "we will pass over that—not a type sympathetic to me, shall we say? And in any case—"

"What?" Thérèse prompted

"You must understand" [illegible]

[illegible] ...quette and I have been in Paris some [illegible] one has been very strange, it is, she says, her siege, in time, she says, the walls will fall down What walls I can never be sure—perhaps of Paris, perhaps of Barbet's prison, perhaps of Jericho. She has worn herself out, seeing people, sitting in waiting-rooms, standing on doorsteps. But always she has said 'Whatever we do, we must not go to Therèse Despreux Barbet would be angry Barbet would not allow us to interfere with her life' That is why I turned my back this afternoon. But this evening I came."

"I'm glad. You saw the show?"

That this question was as necessary to an actress as the breath she breathed did not appear to Madame Vincent

"I waited on the pavement," she said

"But why?"

"The entertainment would not have interested me"

"I'm sorry," said Therese, who admired so much plainness "But you are a woman of the world? You don't disapprove?"

"That," said Madame Vincent, "is not the point Poor Chouquette—"

"How is Madame Hazard?"

"That," said Madame Vincent, "is the point She has taken it into her silly head to die. She is, in consequence, dying All nonsense, of course. She was never a reasonable woman I am very fond of her, you understand"

Only the profound earnestness, the abrupt emotion, with which these words were spoken prevented Thérèse from laughing at them Like Courcelet, she had delight in the incongruous and it pleased her to watch a black bonnet shake its ribbons against the street lamps where his silk hat might have been

"Where are we going?" Madame Vincent demanded, looking about her in sudden alarm

"The Île St Louis I live there"

"But I am staying at Vanves"

"You can't possibly go to Vanves to-night Do you know what time it is? You must stay with me to-night We will go to Vanves in the morning"

Therese felt her companion stiffen to resistance 'But—" she began

"You had better allow me to take charge, dear Madame Vincent I think you have done enough for to day There is some supper at home You can tell me everything then"

For a moment the warrior contemplated battle for her independence, her forearm became rigid, then, feeling Therese s fingers interlaced with her own, she tightened her grip as children do when they are on the verge of tears, and said

"You are kind, Therese Despreux I didn't know you could be so kind Yes, I have been on my feet all day Oh dear!'

Her body relaxed She leaned back against the cushion A gleam on her cheek told Thérèse that her tears were falling

"You have a very comfortable carriage," she said "Is it your own or hired?"

"My own"

They drove on

"Oh dear," she said, "what will they think—the Verviers—if I don't return to-night?'

Thérèse did not ask who the Verviers might be She was afraid the old lady might faint and looked into her face anxiously

"I will explain everything to the Verviers. Don't trouble about anything at all'

"But you have a spare room?" Madame Vincent demanded.

"No," said Therese, "I haven't, but I have a very large bed. It is called Castor and Pollux."

Suddenly Madame Vincent burst out laughing "I am a large woman," she said and laughed no more

As the carriage stopped, Therese was hoping that Courcelet might use his key that evening and find Madame Vincent on his pillow

"Red Riding Hood," she said

"Why Red Riding Hood?" asked Madame Vincent.

"I'm afraid there are several flights of stairs," said Thérèse. "Give me your arm"

At supper, Madame Vincent came to life. She was so interested in the management of Therese's small household that, until her curiosity was satisfied, she could not speak consecutively of Rousignac. She wanted to know at what time the maid, who had evidently laid the supper, went away, at what hour of the morning she returned and what wages she demanded. Why was there supper laid for two?

"There's always supper for two" Therèse answered, "in case I bring someone back After a performance I'm never sleepy I like to talk

"And if you bring no one, supper is wasted?"

There was much else that Madame Vincent wished to know Why, for example was the bed called Castor and Pollux? "Because, said Therese, it is shaped like a swan," and Madame Vincent pursed her lips sceptically over the story of Leda and the father of the gods

"Well" she said "I shouldn't have thought it practicable."

"You wait until you get into it," Therese exclaimed "It's the most practicable bed in the world, and the wings keep out the draught"

I didn't mean the bed," said Madame Vincent. "I meant the story"

Only the profound earnestness, the abrupt emotion, with which these words were spoken prevented Thérèse from laughing at them. Like Courcelet, she had delight in the incongruous and it pleased her to watch a black bonnet shake its ribbons against the street lamps where his silk hat might have been.

"Where are we going?" Madame Vincent demanded, looking about her in sudden alarm.

"The Île St. Louis. I live there."

"But I am staying at Vanves."

"You can't possibly go to Vanves to-night. Do you know what time it is? You must stay with me to-night. We will go to Vanves in the morning."

Thérèse felt her companion stiffen to resistance. "But—" she began.

"You had better allow me to take charge, dear Madame Vincent. I think you have done enough for to-day. There is some supper at *home. You can tell me everything then.*"

For a moment the warrior contemplated battle for her independence; her forearm became rigid; then, feeling Thérèse's fingers interlaced with her own, she tightened her grip as children do when they are on the verge of tears, and said:

"You are kind, Thérèse Despreux. I didn't know you could be so kind. . . . Yes, I have been on my feet all day. Oh dear!"

Her body relaxed. She leaned back against the cushion. A gleam on her cheek told Thérèse that her tears were falling.

"You have a very comfortable carriage," she said. "Is it your own or hired?"

"My own."

They drove on.

"Oh dear," she said, "what will they think—the Verviers—*if I don't return to-night?*"

Thérèse did not ask who the Verviers might be. She was afraid the old lady might faint and looked into her face anxiously.

"I will explain everything to the Verviers. Don't trouble about anything at all."

"I understand that," said Thérèse. "I ran away from Angoulême."

Madame Vincent shrugged her shoulders. "But you can't run away from facts. He went on drawing the money It's true he put it in the poor box, half in the pastor's and half in the curé's, but that didn't help him 'That's a pretty thing,' they said, 'to be charitable with the State's money What credit do you take for that?' 'None,' said Barbet. 'Then what have you to say?' 'Nothing,' said Barbet. 'But we understood that you were a saint? We understood that you performed miracles? Probably you wish to reform the world?' 'No,' said Barbet. 'Then you are content with the world?' 'No,' said Barbet. 'Then why do you not wish to reform it?' They were trying," Madame Vincent added, "or at any rate Victor says that they were trying, to prove that Barbet was subversive, that he was revolutionary The next question they asked him was did he know that songs were being sung about him in Paris?"

"My songs. What did he say?"

"He said yes."

"No more?"

"They asked whether he had arranged that these songs should be sung, whether he had friends in Paris, why he went to Paris regularly To sell cognac, he said . Oh, he answered all their questions quite simply But they weren't clever answers. He seemed not to know they were trying to confuse him"

"If he were burned at the stake," said Therese, "it wouldn't occur to him that the executioner wished to burn him. Do you despise him, Madame Vincent?"

"No"

"You did once"

"That is true I like a man to defend himself"

"And he didn't?"

"No certainly he didn't Oh, I don't know what it is. I don't easily change my opinions But, do you know, at the trial, I kept thinking of what Barbet's mother used to say of him when he was a boy 'You can't get *at* him,' she used to say 'He's a good

At last, propped against the quilted satin of the swan's neck, she gave Therese her version of Barbet's trial and sentence and of the events that had followed it

'The world, you see, my dear Therese, isn't as *simple* as men like Barbet suppose"

Again and again they had asked him why he let the prisoners out and he had always given the same reply that it had seemed wrong for him to keep them shut up But didn't he know the law?—yes Didn't he respect the law?—yes Did he *suggest* that *all* prisons should be thrown open and all punishment cease? He had *answered* that he suggested nothing at all He wasn t a ruler or a judge He had no power to open other prisons, but he could *open* his own, and he did

Then they had examined him about the money for the prisoners' upkeep He said it hadn't entered his mind that he would have to continue to draw it After the prisoners were gone he had seen that, if he ceased to draw the money, inquiries would be *made before* they had had time to go to ground They would all have been *recaptured* As it was, only one had been The Court had been puzzled But hadn't he known that sooner or later the secret must come out?—yes And he had been prepared to take the consequences?—he hadn't looked ahead to the consequences But that was absurd Everyone looked ahead Everyone ought to look ahead

At this point in her narrative Madame Vincent drew up her knees under the bedclothes and shook her finger at Thérèse

'Sometimes,' she continued Barbet is as foolish as his mother To answer as he did isn t the way to get on with men of the world He made them angry I don t agree he said His mother is like that 'I don't agree,' she says and you can get no more sense out of her 'What do you mean—you don t agree? they asked I mean,' said Barbet, 'that for some people—anyhow for me, I can t speak for others—the only way to do a thing is to stop arguing about it If I hadn't argued and looked ahead, I should have done this long ago Well, I stopped arguing and did it' '

her face. She tried to lift her head from the pillow but she could only turn it—first to the left, then to the right—looking at the room. 'Still at the Verviers,' she said, as though she expected to be at the gates of Paradise."

Madame Vincent stared at Thérèse. "Do you understand?" she demanded. "That is why I came to you. Chouquette means to go through that door as she went through the others. It was as if she had taken a ticket to heaven and come back to the place she started from. 'Still at the Verviers,' she said."

"But listen," Thérèse answered, "if you remind her that Barbet is still in prison—"

"No," said Madame Vincent, "I have tried that. I have even said: 'My dear Chouquette, you have not yet been to the Élysée.' 'The Élysée,' she answered. 'It is not necessary. The Emperor has signed the order of release.' And she has made up her mind to die—and die she will." Madame Vincent was examining the embroidery of Thérèse's sheets. "I am," she said, nodding sleepily, "at the end of my resources. But perhaps in the morning we shall know what to do . . . Tell me again, I have forgotten the story of Leda. A swan, I know—but did you say an eagle?"

"It was Venus who became an eagle," Thérèse explained. "Leda was a woman, dear Madame Vincent"

"Oh, fiddlesticks," replied Madame Vincent, "the whole thing is impracticable. You yourself told me she laid an egg."

boy and he's not a fool But he does foolish things,' she said, 'and it's no good arguing, it's no good punishing He doesn't complain or struggle or defend himself, but you can't reach him, you can't get at him, you—' There," Madame Vincent went on after a pause, "it's very odd, but I didn't even feel sorry for him at the trial He was perfectly happy He didn't need defending When it was over and he was given a chance to make a few arrangements before going to prison, he said to Victor 'Well, Anton has the property Every thing is settled' Victor couldn't help asking 'What shall you do when you come out?' and Barbet laughed and said 'At the moment, Victor, I haven't an idea Would Hazard and Vincent give me a job as a cooper if I asked for it?' But Victor says he wasn't really asking a question He didn't wait for an answer He sent a message to his mother that she was to live quietly as if he were there Then he went away And of course," Madame Vincent added, 'she hasn't lived quietly After a time, she went off to Paris by herself and no one could stop her In the end I came up—not before it was time. She'd have been in prison herself in another day She always was a silly woman I can manage her better than most but even I couldn't stop her going where she meant to go and seeing the people she meant to see The extraordinary thing is that they let her in But they did In the end, she got through any door she chose 'There,' she said, 'you see, my dear Emilie, I'm not as mad as you think' I went with her If I hadn't been there for them to wink at—well, no matter What I was afraid of was that she might think of the Elysée And one day she did To morrow,' she said, we go to the Elysée That will be the end That will be the end The President will grant a pardon You mark my words that will be the end But that night, in the house of those skinflint cousins at Vanves, she began to shiver Her face was burning and her feet like ice. We put her to bed and kept her there, but all through the fever she was at the Elysée or the Tuileries She led us a pretty dance through history Any President would do—Thiers, Grevy, anyone you please, and if it wasn't a President, it was Napoleon III, and if it wasn't Napoléon III it was Napoleon I I thought she would die but she didn't And do you know she was disappointed, as though a door had been slammed in

"You mean—in death?"

"I mean in life. He thinks the door is shut, but it is open."

"Who thinks the door is shut?"

"Barbet," said Madame Hazard. "It is raining outside. I can see it sliding on the leaves. I think I could sleep now for a little while."

During the days that followed, of which she spent a great part at Vanves, Thérèse was at first glad that her contract with Plence had not been renewed. Since she had become celebrated, intervals between her engagements had been few and short, and on each occasion to be in Paris and not to work had been for her a kind of desolation, as the time approached at which she would have gone on to the stage, she had begun to ache and be frightened, and no book, no company, no diversion had appeased in her the hunger for an audience, but now she did not feel this hunger, the planes of her reality shifted, she no longer thought of the Écurie as her real life and was able even to forget that she was an actress.

On Tuesday evening, about seven o'clock, she left Madame Hazard's room and came into the little garden or courtyard that lay in front of the Verviers' house. It was a square patch of gravel and evergreens, divided by a palisade of ornamental sheet iron and a gate from the footpath up which she must walk to her carriage. Monsieur Verviers had returned from his desk at the Crédit Lyonnais, he had hung his bowler hat and his jacket on a branch and was smoothing the gravel with a wooden rake. His wife, a close-eyed, aquiline woman with a bodice that held her arms always a few inches from her sides and gave her the appearance of having been stuffed, was watching him in silence. They had at first been suspicious of Thérèse but were no longer. She had pleased Monsieur Verviers by asking him questions about finance, which made him feel that he was more than a bank clerk; she had discovered that Madame Verviers, in her youth, had, like herself, worked at a milliner's and their discussions had been ardently professional, and she had made them laugh. For years they had found nothing in particular to say to each other, and to laugh together was a relief in

Chapter 4

NEXT MORNING, THE LAST SUNDAY OF MAY, Therèse drove out to Vanves and stayed long with Madame Hazard, less in deliberate kindness than because the old lady, drawing near to death, had acquired so strong a resemblance to her son that Thérese was fascinated by it In watching her, she began to understand that Madame Vincent had been wrong in supposing her to be mad and in believing that she was arrogantly or foolishly knocking on the door of death Sometimes a cloud of delirium passed over Madame Hazard's mind and she spoke of the first Napoleon as if she had been in his presence, but what had appeared to Madame Vincent as madness was only an extreme simplification of life, something child-like in the sense of being faithful and penetrating, a reliance upon nature and upon a goodness inherent in it Madame Hazard had, indeed, been what Madame Vincent called "a silly woman," fussy, bubbling over, given to agitations, but these were gone from her now, the dross was gone, she neither clung to life nor clamoured for death, their continuity having appeared to her The "silly woman," even the vain and pretty girl she had been once, could still speak with her lips, but there was within her a tranquil because an accepting spirit

She could no longer be surprised and did not ask how it had come about that Therèse Despreux was at her bedside "Barbet," she said, "will be glad to find you when he comes" Later she said 'I remember I thought you had a wicked face But he was right I see now" And in the late afternoon, when fine rain had begun to drop from the rail of her little balcony, and the white of her hair and of her pillow to shine in the premature dusk, she said "After all, there is nothing to be afraid of"

"You mean—in death?"

"I mean in life. He thinks the door is shut, but it is open."

"Who thinks the door is shut?"

"Barbet," said Madame Hazard. "It is raining outside. I can see it sliding on the leaves. I think I could sleep now for a little while."

During the days that followed, of which she spent a great part at Vanves, Therese was at first glad that her contract with Plence had not been renewed. Since she had become celebrated, intervals between her engagements had been few and short, and on each occasion to be in Paris and not to work had been for her a kind of desolation; as the time approached at which she would have gone on to the stage, she had begun to ache and be frightened, and no book, no company, no diversion had appeased in her the hunger for an audience, but now she did not feel this hunger, the planes of her reality shifted, she no longer thought of the Écurie as her real life and was able even to forget that she was an actress.

On Tuesday evening, about seven o'clock, she left Madame Hazard's room and came into the little garden or courtyard that lay in front of the Derviers' house. It was a square patch of gravel and evergreens, divided by a palisade of ornamental sheet iron and a gate from the footpath up which she must walk to her carriage. Monsieur Verviers had returned from his desk at the Crédit Lyonnais; he had hung his bowler hat and his jacket on a branch and was smoothing the gravel with a wooden rake. His wife, a close-eyed, aquiline woman with a bodice that held her arms always a few inches from her sides and gave her the appearance of having been stuffed, was watching him in silence. They had at first been suspicious of Therese but were no longer. She had pleased Monsieur Verviers by asking him questions about finance, which made him feel that he was more than a bank clerk; she had discovered that Madame Verviers, in her youth, had, like herself, worked at a milliner's and their discussions had been ardently professional; and she had made them laugh. For years they had found nothing in particular to say to each other, and to laugh together was a relief in

their long matrimonial silence When Thérèse came from the house, they were, with reserve, glad to see her.

"And how is the patient?"

"No worse"

"So the doctor said this morning."

"But I wanted to ask you, monsieur You are her cousin and—"

"Her second cousin"

"You are her second cousin and I of course am not related Nor is Madame Vincent if it comes to that Neither of us has any authority It is for you to decide, but we thought that the people at Roussignac—"

"By all means By all means send for them," said Monsieur Verviers "A wise precaution, I'm sure How many will there be?"

"Anton certainly and Bette, I suppose She would never miss a funeral And Victor—Madame Vincent's son—he won't let Anton out of his sight for long Perhaps Renee, if Pierre lets her come Pierre will have to stay to look after the Maison Hazard"

"A married couple, then," said Madame Verviers, reckoning on her fingers "They could have the back room on the same terms The others we could lodge with the neighbours"

"If I sent a telegram as I go—"

"As urgent as that?" Monsieur Verviers interrupted "Is it necessary to waste a telegram?"

"At my own expense"

"Ah, I see Well, living as we do, I suppose we don't understand the ways of the stage" Monsieur Verviers set to work again with this rake "A telegram—yes A different life. A different life altogether"

Thérèse smiled, but suddenly the planes of her reality shifted again I suppose the truth is, she thought, that I am capable of playing any part—even the part of a woman who has ceased to be an actress Sitting in Madame Hazard's room, I play the part appropriate to that room and that company, and thinking of her and Barbet and the life at Roussignac I hoodwink myself into believing that the Écurie isn't my real life after all—just because for a couple of days I haven't hankered after it. It's a kind of romantic vanity,

I suppose. Philippe was probably right "Just as the way one lives marks the face, so it marks the mind and harnesses the will"

Although Parliament was sitting, Courcelet had arranged to go out of Paris for a wedding in the neighbourhood of Tours On Wednesday Therese had luncheon with him before he took his afternoon train He would be away, he said, three or four days, and she was careful not to ask him to be more precise. It was his habit to give no account of his movements. He had her keys, he liked to use them unexpectedly, and she was content that he should enjoy his privilege—the more content because she had no impulse to deceive him At luncheon she enjoyed his company as she always did, for he could listen as well as he could talk, and there was nothing she could tell of the Verviers that did not interest him He appeared to regard them as sociological specimens He wanted to know what they said of politics, what clothes they wore, what newspapers they read, and she phrased her account to entertain him From the subject of Madame Hazard he slid away, for to die was to him a solecism that it was embarrassing to discuss. He played with the bread beside his plate, he tapped his glass with his finger nail and Therese said to herself Now what is it that he has on his mind? what plot is he hatching? He said "yes yes" distractedly turning his head away from the new earnestness in Therèse —always turning away until she repeated Madame Hazard s words He thinks the door is shut, but it is open' Then he swung round His eyes lighted with curiosity, as though the words had some special significance for him

"Say that again

Therese said it again

Did you ask what she meant?'

'I asked who?

Well? What did she answer?'

Her mind was wandering"

"What did she answer?'

Something about Barbet and the trees."

Do you remember her words?'

Thérèse laughed Why should I?'

"You have a memory What did she say? What, precisely, did she say?"

"I said 'Who thinks the door is shut?' She said 'Barbet'—but I doubt whether she was answering me She was just thinking about *him* Then she said. 'It's raining outside I can see it sliding off the leaves'"

"Could *you* see it?"

"What?"

"The rain You said it was becoming dusk She's an old woman Is her eyesight as good as that?"

"I don't know I suppose so Are you mad, Philippe? What on earth has all this to do with you?"

"Did you see the leaves yourself?" he persisted

"I didn't look"

"Try to remember, Thérèse Was there in fact any tree within sight of her pillow?"

"Possibly not There are trees in the Verviers' garden but—what are you getting at? Have you turned into a policeman?"

"Tell me," he said, "one thing more What time was this?"

"About six"

"After or before?"

"After six And now," she said, "will you tell me what all this is about?"

He would not Though she went to the station with him, he did not return to the subject

On Thursday, Thérèse found Anton, Bette and Victor in possession at Vanves She was allowed to visit Madame Hazard but not to stay in her room Bette considered her coming impudent and her presence a contamination When Madame Vincent said that Thérèse had been kind and that Madame Hazard liked to have her in the room, a battle of words began between the two women, and Madame Vincent, a sturdy fighter not given to surrender, quailed and yielded She became inwardly ashamed of having brought into the house an actress whom Bette still thought of as the tart from Angoulême, and Thérèse, when she understood this, lost courage She went into the

patch of garden in front of the house and stood there on the gravel, wondering what would become of her when the years of her celebrity were done. Except among people of the theatre, she was an alien; all others, whether like Bette they were censorious or like Courcelet of a freer class and temper, considered her to be different in kind from themselves, to be scorned, played with, tolerated, desired, even worshipped, but always with the reserve that she was alien among them. They would not trust her beyond the entertainment she gave. She tried to believe that this was because she was an actress or because she had had lovers, but the world had accepted actresses and wantons as it would never accept her, and she remembered that Courcelet had said: "You ruin yourself by talk. It's not even that you have been wanton, my dear Therese; a woman can grow out of that, but you have used your wantonness as an advertisement. It is a placard that wrinkles on the wall."

She drove away from Vanves in a rage of melancholy. Perhaps that's true only of Paris, she thought. If I gave up the stage and went away, I'm still young enough to—but she saw her life of the theatre as a prison to which she had become accustomed. "He thinks the door is shut, but it is open." And if I went out, what then? Do I want the life of theVerviers? Now, when I get home, what then? I wish to God I had renewed Plence's contract. I wish I had a theatre to go to. I could sing to-night. I could cut them to pieces and send them out gaping and squalling. She had made no engagement for that evening and leaned forward with the intention of telling the coachman to drive—but she could think of no one whom she wished to see and fell back again in her seat. At her flat was a note from Templéraud asking her to go with him on Saturday to the Battle of Flowers in the Tuileries, and suggesting that afterwards they should dine together. With a wry smile, she returned it to its envelope. Since she and he had ceased to be lovers, she had learned to look back upon her suffering at that time with an iron indifference as though it were the suffering of another woman with whom her intimacy had been lost. Templéraud and she had met seldom except to work, and always under the constraint of a friendship deliberately preserved. And now what does he want? she thought. To be seen

about with me—or more? She shrugged her shoulders She had no longer any desire for Templéraud, but—it would do Courcelet good, if he returned, to learn that the placard wasn't yet wrinkled on the wall

This mood of reckless defiance, which in the past had served as her answer to all the rebuffs of the world, could not be preserved She struggled to preserve it, it had been an escape from thought, a form of intoxication, but now, in spite of herself, she no longer wished to "go out and get drunk" and the notion of reverting to an old lover bored her A new one, then? But what new lover would sit up in bed next morning and while drinking his coffee, watch the sparrows pecking at the window-boxes, and make her laugh with stories of Roussignac, and suddenly take her breath away by saying "Do you know, Therese, I suppose we are as unsuitable a pair as ever woke on the same pillow, and yet whenever we are together it seems to me always the most natural thing in the world" She had laughed then and slid her hand under his and shaken her head at the impossible, but nothing ever said to her, no praise, no swearing of love, had so warmed her heart or given her such enduring happiness. It was an inward happiness which, without reversing the theory of her life, had changed its practice Not her morals but her tastes were altered What's the matter with me, she said to herself, is that I'm not a tramp any more

Because she had promised, she went with Templéraud to the Battle of Flowers The wheels of her carriage and her sunshade were garlanded, and from a great basket at their feet she and Templeraud replied with handfuls of flowers to bombardments by friends and strangers, but rain spoiled the festival, the military bands were driven into a marquee, men in silk hats turned up their trousers above their ankles, splashed through the puddles and threw wet flowers from inverted umbrellas used as baskets Small boys did a new trade in picking flowers out of the mud, holding them under jets of water and selling them again She found that even the bitterness she had once felt and controlled in Templeraud's company was

gone, and could remember without a pang—as an actress may remember the genuine emotion of last season's play—that she had once discussed with the young man at her side the romantic pleasures of their taking a house together. Thinking of Barbet and of his continuity in her life, she said amiably to Templéraud "I wonder who is living in the house we might have taken in Burgundy?" To be able to say this gave her the satisfaction there is in writing an epitaph.

After less than an hour, she ordered her carriage to drive home, shook off her companion, changed and sat down to neglected letters. Even Madame Vincent's news that Madame Hazard was sinking failed to stir her. "I think she cannot live more than three or four days," Madame Vincent wrote. "Come if you can on Monday afternoon or evening. If she is no worse, Anton and Bette will be away then, perhaps Victor, too. It seems that the vines at the Maison Hazard have been attacked by the phylloxera. They are to have a meeting with a lawyer (they have had two already) to discover, I think, whether there isn't some way out of Anton's purchase of the property from Barbet. They want to suggest that he knew before he went to prison; they say *he* told them the vines were free of disease—in other words that he cheated them. Not that they say much to me. Bette tells me nothing; Victor little. He says that they haven't a legal leg to stand on; he wants them to keep away from lawyers and take their chance that Barbet himself may think it unfair to hold them to their bargain. Oh dear! Oh dear! what bitterness! I believe it wasn't so much poor Chouquette as this phylloxera that brought them to Paris. I said as much to Bette. She has become a hard woman. 'Two birds with one stone,' was all she said. When I think of her as a little girl—I used to be angry with her then for being so soft! People change in that way, women more than men. What she says they want is permission to visit Barbet. The man who can give permission, or obtain it, is Monsieur de Courcelet. Victor knows him or says he does; but at the Ministry of the Interior they say that Courcelet is out of Paris—back on Saturday night, perhaps Monday. You, dear Therese, will know the truth of that?

I didn't mention our meeting in the Bois, though Victor, of course, knows already that you have influence in that quarter But you needn't worry. Victor would come to you but Bette won't allow it I said that I thought your advice might be useful But I'm getting old Bette and Victor are no longer my children They don't listen to me any more Come on Monday Chouquette spoke of you on Thursday and I shall be glad to see you Do you know that Chouquette said to me only an hour ago that she would like a game of piquet? I had even to get out the cards, but when they were there she didn't notice them She had forgotten That's how it is Come on Monday, if you can"

Thérèse looked at her calendar Monday, then—the day after to morrow—and she wrote "Vanves" Her clock said that before long Templéraud would return to take her out to dinner If he wished to be her lover or supposed that she wished it, their evening would be spoiled But after all, she thought, as she began to dress, there's always a good chance that he feels as I do

When he came, she said "Tell me, do you feel as I do?"

"About what, Therèse?"

"Us"

He hesitated, smiling "I expect you have fallen in love," he said "Annette and I are together again"

"That's all right," she said, "now we can dine comfortably Whether for peace of mind or for the pleasures of anticipation, it's always best to know at the beginning of an evening where one will drink one's last cognac"

"You are an astonishing person, Thérèse What were you afraid of?"

"Only," she said, "that we might go to bed together out of politeness I did that once So did he"

"And wasn't it a success?"

"In fact," she said, "it was"

"Why, then," he asked, "what happened?" and he put her cloak over her shoulders

"The sparrows," she answered, "would eat the flowers in my window-boxes"

"Good," said Templeraud, "couldn't we make a song of that?"
"No, we couldn't," said Therese "Is it still raining?"

Late that night, she was reading in her window-seat Templeraud, who had been a good companion at dinner, had come in for a last cigarette with her and had been gone more than an hour Supper for two was on the table, but the silver covers had not been moved from the dishes and the cork was undrawn.

She laid down her book and said to herself I suppose I have gone mad, but it is true I love Barbet Since that night—no, long before that—since the day I went to sleep in the sunshine at St. Cloud, before that—since the evening when I saved his life, the evening of my albatross. And I d rather be at Vernon with him to-morrow than in any other place with any other human being on earth

The river was gleaming under her She leaned from her window and stroked the damp stone of the sill The idea entered her mind that Barbet was in the room behind her For that reason, she dared not turn, but continued to watch the Seine and the figures of two men approaching each other on the bridge When they had passed and were out of sight, she withdrew from the window The clock on the mantelpiece began to chime

There was a knock at the outer door Courcelet had forgotten his key For a long time she had been silent, and now did not move Unless he had searched for her light as he left his cab, he could have no certainty that she was in But he might look up at the window of the sitting room as he went away She blew out the candles and stood in darkness

He knocked again and because she was resolved not to admit him she stayed in mid floor trying to smile at the trick she was playing him but her mouth remained hut, her arms were stiff at her sides and the muscles of her flanks were so tautened that her legs began to tremble A third knocking was followed by a shuffle of footsteps in withdrawal and they were not Courcelet s footsteps. She wished in an agony to move and could not, then, with a little cry of intaken breath moved to call back, before he was gone, this

I didn't mention our meeting in the Bois, though Victor, of course, knows already that you have influence in that quarter But you needn't worry. Victor would come to you but Bette won't allow it I said that I thought your advice might be useful But I'm getting old Bette and Victor are no longer my children They don't listen to me any more Come on Monday Chouquette spoke of you on Thursday and I shall be glad to see you Do you know that Chouquette said to me only an hour ago that she would like a game of piquet? I had even to get out the cards, but when they were there she didn't notice them She had forgotten That's how it is Come on Monday, if you can"

Therèse looked at her calendar Monday, then—the day after to morrow—and she wrote "Vanves" Her clock said that before long Templeraud would return to take her out to dinner If he wished to be her lover or supposed that she wished it, their evening would be spoiled But after all, she thought, as she began to dress, there's always a good chance that he feels as I do

When he came, she said "Tell me, do you feel as I do?"

"About what, Therese?"

"Us"

He hesitated, smiling "I expect you have fallen in love," he said "Annette and I are together again"

"That's all right," she said, "now we can dine comfortably Whether for peace of mind or for the pleasures of anticipation, it's always best to know at the beginning of an evening where one will drink one's last cognac"

"You are an astonishing person, Thérèse What were you afraid of?"

"Only," she said, "that we might go to bed together out of politeness I did that once So did he"

"And wasn't it a success?"

"In fact," she said, "it was"

"Why, then," he asked, "what happened?" and he put her cloak over her shoulders

"The sparrows," she answered, "would eat the flowers in my window-boxes"

At last she said "Have they released you, Barbet?"

"No, I walked out"

"Then you may be recaptured? You may be taken back?"

"I suppose so But I don't think that will happen" He put down the grapes and held out his coffee cup to be refilled "You see, it all came about in this way The warder comes round the cells at regular times. That evening—"

"Was it on Tuesday?"

He counted with the fingers of one hand on his knee "One night in the open, then the barn, then a railway truck—yes, the next was last night—four I suppose it was Tuesday It seems a long time ago"

"Was it at six o'clock? Soon after six?"

He nodded without surprise "Afterwards, in the square, the clock said a quarter to seven I was on my way then"

Before continuing his story, he put out his hand and touched her shoulder, as though the contact were necessary to establish in his mind a distinction between actual and remembered experience. "The warder went out and shut the door," he said. "Between then and lights-out isn't an easy time It's the longest part of the day As I walked round the cell I was thinking that just through the wall, there'd be grass growing up against the stone, if I could put my hand through, I should touch the grass and, if I *was* touching the grass, I should be free It doesn't do, in prison, to think in that way You may get it into your head that, if you walked straight on, you'd go through the stone, that's how men go mad and dash themselves against walls I always turned away from thoughts of that kind, they boil and curdle in the mind there's no outlet So I stopped walking and knelt where I was and set myself to remember that my being shut up didn't change things at Roussignac Everything there was going on just the same. It was still the *mois de Marie*—"

"It wasn't," said Thérèse "It was the 1st of June"

"Perhaps it was," Barbet answered. "I thought it was May I saw the boys and the young girls and women going to church in the evening and I remembered that when I was a boy it was always in

departing visitor. There was darkness in the passage of the flat and on the landing also From the well of the staircase, only silence came up, no footfall descending Near to her was that inaudible stirring which informs the senses that darkness is occupied He was not gone She drove her wrist against the brooch she wore and heard her own deep sigh He was waiting, perhaps within reach of her hand, but, when she stretched it out, she encountered nothing She felt her way along the wall, pressed against it as though she were on a narrow ridge overhanging a precipice What her fingers touched at last was an oilskin coat, then by clumsy chance the stubble of his chin, and she said "Barbet It's Therèse"

"Yes"

"Wait until I bring a candle"

"No, Therese" With his shoulders he thrust himself away from the wall "I'm all right I can follow you"

"Give me your hand then"

When he was in a chair and two candles were lighted, she opened the wine

"You always have a corkscrew, Thérèse"

He tried to laugh but the sound ended abruptly in his throat

"Oh, Barbet!" Giving him the wine, she put her face against his, and said "Your hair's dripping Your feet are soaked I'll light the fire Wasn't I clever to have this kind of stove?"

As soon as the fire was lit and a kettle put on to boil, she undid the swollen laces of his boots "Gently," he said, "they won't come off easily Let me do it" He leaned forward with hand stretched out, then fell back "Sorry I leave them to you" And when at last the boots and the oilskin were off, she brought a towel and dried his head The hair stood up, the socks began to steam She took off his socks, dried his feet and gave him Courcelet s wool lined slippers. Until coffee was made, she spoke only of little things, content not to be answered Asked whether he was hungry "I was," he replied, "but I've gone past it for a bit Don't worry, Thérese There's nothing I want I'm happy to be here" She brought a dish from the supper-table "Presently," he said Meanwhile he held a bunch of grapes in the palm of his hand and ate from it.

"Go on," she said. "Isn't there a gate to the prison? When you came out of the cell, you weren't in the open?"

"I was in the big courtyard. All the cells opened on a covered way that ran round the courtyard As I came out, there was a little knot of workmen, six masons with their tools, walking ahead of me down the covered way. I walked behind them. I made the seventh. Against the wall were some barrels of cement and on the barrels they had left their oilskins and oilskin hats When they had taken their oilskins, two were left. I put on one and walked through the gate with them."

"Didn't they count? Didn't they notice they were seven, not six?"

"But why should they, Thérèse? Why do you make everything so complicated? If you were a mason at the end of your day's work, would you stop in the rain and say 'One, two, three, four, five, six?' Would you?"

"No But the oilskins, the two extra oilskins."

"I suppose two men were working late"

"Doesn't it occur to you that all this happened because—oh, I don't know," she said "It all seems simple to you And you walked to Paris. There must have been a hue and cry, there must have been descriptions out How did you hide yourself?"

"I didn't," Barbet answered "I asked for what I needed and people gave it to me I don't think there is a hue and cry I saw two newspapers There wasn't a word Surely there would have been? When I let my own prisoners out, the newspapers became excited about it as if it were extraordinary, as if I had done something against the Government If they knew I had escaped—"

"*If* they knew!" Therese cried "Now I understand The newspapers haven't been told That's what Philippe was getting at! He must have known on Wednesday that you were out but he wouldn't tell anyone—not even me Oh, Barbet, if only I were singing at the Lune! I could make France laugh! I could have all Paris in the streets by to-morrow night! That's what Philippe was afraid of."

"But, Thérèse, who wants to have all Paris in the streets? I don't

May that I wished I wasn't a Protestant. You know, even Victor was happy in May It's what I remember about him The Vincents put up a shrine in their house the Virgin in white with a blue sash—"

"I remember it!" Thérese exclaimed "I went there with mother A tiny figure on a star spangled globe"

"You know," he continued, looking past her, "the silence in a prison is an extraordinary silence Sometimes there are sounds—boots in the passage or a man howling—but they only increase the silence You have to fill it So, as I stood there, off I went through the Long Wood You remember the two spurges—the leafy-branched spurge and the wood spurge—the two differing greens, like two sisters? Often I heard, near me, very near me, inside my cell, the flute of the golden oriole I looked for him but he wasn't there When I came out of the wood and had walked into the town, I found my own squirrel and the yellow wallflower that grows wild on the church and in your father's garden his big yellow roses drooping as if they were as heavy as wax And, Therèse, listen, I went on to the Cheval Pie, expecting to find you there, but suddenly I remembered that you were in Paris and everything shifted. I was *in prison You were in Paris Outside the wall there was grass* and I had to twist away from the grass and walk and walk in the cell before I could be still again By that time it was the binetu I heard I was in the vines and my mother was with me She would always have it that she was the first to hear the binetu, so I pretended not to hear it For some reason she began to whisper I couldn't hear I stooped down to hear what she said 'The door's open,' she was saying 'The door is open' As I stooped, my shoulder touched the door of my cell It rattled and came away from the frame two inches So I opened it and walked out"

"Listen, Barbet,' Therese said, you say that as if it were the most natural thing in the world The warder must have locked your door."

"I thought so, of course I thought it was shut, but it was open. That's all I know"

"Very little of it."

"Very little of it!" he repeated. "You haven't eaten any at all."

"I wasn't hungry. I'm not now. You can have mine."

"Thank you. . . ." He sat on the edge of a chair, clasping and unclasping his hands. "Therèse," he said, "something has happened. There's a chance you may be able to help. Why in heaven's name are you laughing?"

"I wasn't," she replied, holding her face between her hands. "Anyhow, not at you."

"I adore you," he said, "but you are an infuriating girl. Whatever you were laughing at is irrelevant. This—"

"Oh no, it's not," she cried. "It's so relevant, I shall die if I'm not allowed to laugh. My cheeks are aching. Oh! . . . All right, I'll be good and listen. What has happened? Another note to Greece?"

He hesitated. "Is it of any use to tell you? You wouldn't help if you could. And yet you'll have to know with the rest of France. What has happened is that Barbet Hazard has escaped."

"You might have told me that on Wednesday afternoon before you went to Tours."

"You knew? How could you?"

"I didn't."

"You mean, you guessed?"

"My poor Philippe, you were very conspiratorial."

He spread out his hands, baffled. "Anyhow," he said, "the point is that we managed to keep it quiet. He had no money and as far as was known not even a change of clothes. We thought the police were bound to have him within twenty-four hours. Then back he would have gone and nothing need have been said. As it is—"

"But, Philippe," Therese asked, "if you wanted to catch him, surely the first thing to do was to publish descriptions in newspapers."

"Thank you. Not of Barbet Hazard."

"But why?"

"Because he's dangerous. And you know it, Thérèse. It's partly your songs that have made him dangerous. For good or evil, the

want to give trouble to poor Monsieur de Courcelet and his friends Someone, after all, must govern France"

"What do you want, Barbet?"

His body slackened and he looked at her with dazed eyes. "Sleep, I think"

"And to-morrow?"

"Oh," he said, "to-morrow "

He had fallen asleep suddenly with the plunge of exhaustion that is a drowning When she brought him to his feet and helped him to undress, he swayed like a toy soldier on a lead rocker, returning to the upright with a jerk that opened his eyes His lids at once began to droop again When he spoke, his words were so deeply muffled that she did not know whether he was awake or asleep She put him to bed in a silk nightshirt of Courcelet s and stood beside him while he curled himself into a ball

In the sitting room, beside the chair he had used, were his clothes, his boots, the glass and the cup from which he had drunk She gathered his clothes, put them into the bedroom and closed the communicating door So he's in there, she thought It's very odd I suppose what happens next is that I undress and climb into the same bed There s nowhere else to sleep I shall be the first to wake, he won't find me there He'll imagine that he's still in prison or in a barn or a railway truck, and he ll wake up and find my swan—

A key was moving in the lock of the outer door A flood of laughter and delight warmed her body and she greeted Courcelet with an enthusiasm that overwhelmed him

"Well," she said, "what did you come for if you're not pleased to see me?"

"Of course I'm pleased You have a fire?"

"Isn't it cold enough?"

"Whose cup is this?"

"I made some coffee"

He walked across to the table and examined it

"I've had a guest," said Therese

"So I see He appears to have eaten my supper"

While his question was being asked, he had taken off his tie.

"In fact the truth is " Therese began, putting out her hand to prevent him from unfastening his collar

All his experience had not taught him that, if she had wished to be rid of him, she would have lied with accomplished smoothness. Her hesitation, her faltering embarrassment, now awoke in him the suspicions she had designed He stood up, tie in hand, bristling

"What do you mean? What are you trying to say?

"Only that I m tired, too."

"I shan t disturb you."

"But—

So you weren t expecting me? Is that it? Who was your guest at supper? Or are you expecting someone now? He s late, my Therese?"

I m not expecting anyone. And he s not late.

That s a lie.

"It is precisely true

Well then— he said not knowing whether to believe her, searching her eyes, guessing for her mood

She smiled and shook her head. Still you can t stay, my poor Philippe.

Why?"

There isn t room He s here already He s asleep "

A lilt in her tone a light in her eyes, informed Courcelet that his anger was misplaced she was playing a prank on him, no one was there he was being laughed at and could save face only by laughing at himself In any case, jealousy anger all high emotion was out of the part that he had chosen in life. His scenes were the comedy of a discreet and smiling indifference

Now he said, putting his arm round her shoulder "Tell me the joke.

I ll show it to you Come and see "

They went into the bedroom together Barbet s head was so deep in the pillow that he seemed to have burrowed his way into sleep The lace flounce had curled over him and wisps of his hair stuck through it.

surest way to get rid of a government in France is to laugh at it"

"France is a *great* country," she replied with a smile Then with the utmost gravity, the corners of her mouth twitching, she went on "But, Philippe, a harmless little vine-grower—what can he do to you?"

"To morrow a great deal The news is out to night Some workman in the prison lost a suit of oilskins The oilskins were seen next morning in fine weather coming out of a barn ten miles away Two and two were put together A journalist got on the scent and the warders have chattered Anyhow, the newspapers have it To-morrow all Paris will be roaring it 'Barbet releases himself' 'Where is Barbet?' 'Barbet defeats the Government' You can imagine it There can be no end to it If we don't catch him, we shall look fools If we do catch him—"

"You can't *send* him to prison again," said Therèse.

"We must"

"No, Philippe If you *don't* catch him, people will laugh—that's true, and you'll have to bear it But if you do catch him—listen, there are things that no government can do twice If you put him in prison again, France will stop laughing"

Courcelet poured himself out a glass of wine

"You are becoming a politician, Therese I assure you, we have no malice against the man All we want is to hear the last of him"

"That's easy"

"Is it indeed?"

"Whoever wants to be the most popular minister in France must first catch your bird then let him go

Courcelet smiled "We haven t caught him yet" He yawned and stretched himself Well, let us wait until to-morrow It's useless to try to conceal his escape any longer His description is being officially published"

"That also," said Therèse, "is a placard that wrinkles on the wall You'll find it so"

He missed the allusion "I'm tired And sleepy You don't mind if I stay to-night?"

Chapter 5

BARBET SLEPT SO WELL THAT HE DID NOT STIR that night when she lay down beside him or next morning when she awoke. She made plans while she dressed. There was no cause for immediate alarm. When her contract at the Écurie ended, she had given a holiday to her maid, who was still with her family at Sens, and, because it was Sunday, the woman who came in to clean the flat would not appear until the afternoon. Thérèse's temptation was to find a reason to be rid of this woman and to keep Barbet at the Quai d'Orléans but, though she trusted Courcelet, she decided that this was impossible. She was too closely associated with Barbet in the public mind. If there was a hue and cry and his name was again to be on the lips of Paris, her flat would probably be watched and certainly besieged by callers. He must be moved elsewhere, and quickly.

She decided to go to Cugnot for help. He had the kind of recklessness that was unaware of personal risk, and would give Barbet shelter for the plain reason—the only good reason—that shelter is always to be given to a friend who asks for it, whether or not the police happen to have set a price on his head. At her walnut desk she scribbled a message for Barbet, telling him where to find materials with which to make coffee and commanding him at all costs to open the door to no one—"not even to me," she wrote. "I have my key and will let myself in when I return." This note she put upon a chair at his bedside and was about to turn away when there came to her a recollection which, though its form was indistinct, yet halted her. It presented itself as a belief that she had lived through this scene before and her mind, groping for precise correspondence between the present and the past, swayed between delight and fear,

Courcelet, applying his rule against the obvious, forbade himself any exclamation of surprise.

"Well," he said calmly, "it's a big bed and a small man, but there's not room for three of us however sleepy we are. . . . Good night, Thérèse. I have not been here, you understand." He was about to go, when the vitality, the latent energy of that sleeping figure claimed him. He took an observant pace backward and cocked his head as if he were appraising a statue. "My God, the little chap's alive! I wonder what he's dreaming about?"

"He's not dreaming," said Thérèse. "When he's awake, he *is* awake, but when he sleeps, he sleeps."

thinking of his mother's illness. I meant what I said. will he consent to go into hiding at all?"

"In any case, he isn't likely to force an issue," Thérèse answered "He won't go out and give himself up Whatever happens, he will allow to happen naturally I am beginning to understand Barbet He is never bound by any particular circumstance. The fact that he is a fugitive is an accident, it isn't important to him; and he will behave as if he were not one."

It was agreed that she should go at once to the Quai d'Orléans and bring him back with her She found him dressed and unaware of the strangeness of his appearance in the clothes he had worn on his journey He had made coffee

"Nothing seemed to have been used," he said. "Did you forget to make coffee for yourself?"

She had forgotten, but was now hungry and, taking the cup he offered her, sat down beside him He held his own between his hands and, as he tilted it to drink, looked at her over its rim

Vernon," she said

"Why?"

"Do you always hold your coffee-cup as if it were a bowl without a handle?"

I expect so I like the heat under my fingers."

He was completely tranquil as though to be an escaped prisoner were a situation that touched him neither with a sense of danger nor even with curiosity

I have been to Cugnot's," Therese said, steeling herself "I want you to stay with him, at any rate to-night."

His face fell "Must I go from here? I imagined myself coming to you, Therese"

His disappointment so rewarded her and touched her heart that she took his hand before she replied 'And if I hadn't been in?"

I should have waited"

"But I might have gone into the country!" she protested. "I have finished my job at the Écurie I might easily not have been in Paris."

But you were," Barbet said, unperturbed "Since I have been

doubtful of the truth that would be revealed when the mists fell away Gazing at Barbet while he slept, she felt that knowledge was approaching her which, if she could but grasp it, would change her understanding of her life

When knowledge came, it disappointed her at first, it seemed trivial and no match for her boundless expectancy, and she said to herself It was only Frédéric talking nonsense! as though the truth were necessarily mean and of no account because it had been spoken by Frédéric On the day on which she had given a performance in the prison, he had said that she would never be at peace until someone who was in trouble came to her, tired and dull, useless to her, and she gave him safety and put him into her own bed and let him sleep This had been the recollection she sought, this saying—so unlike anything that Frederic had said before or since—was the evocative scent towards which her memory had struggled She shook herself and blamed herself for a fool and set out for Cugnot's studio

There she told Cugnot and Madeleine of all that had happened Madeleine had been out and had seen a poster in which Barbet was described, but the news that he was in Paris and in Therese s flat set them laughing by its unexpectedness *The police give no date of* his escape I had thought of him far away, hiding in barns," Cugnot said, 'and here he is, brought on a magic carpet, asleep at the Quai d'Orléans By to-night certainly by to-morrow, Paris will be talking of nothing but Barbet You had better bring him here at once and not come near the place again yourself You will be followed—if you haven t been already "

"But will he consent? said Madeleine

"To come to you? Why not? He loves you and Cugnot "

' But will he consent to go into hiding at all?'

"Why not?' said Cugnot He s not a fool. Do you mean—because his mother is ill? Therèse need not tell him that

"I shall," Thérèse answered One doesn t lie to him He runs his own life better than any nursemaid can run it for him He knows what to do"

Madeleine put in "That, in a way, is what I meant I wasn t

we are thinking and feeling now Perhaps the balcony at Vernon was theatrical and perhaps a part of our conversation over coffee next morning was absurd; but only proud and pitiless minds put love on its dignity or mock the foolishness of lovers. Do you suppose that Héloise and Abelard were never foolish or animal in their love?"

She was filled by an impulse to tell him what Fréderic had said and how, this morning she had remembered it, but it would be hard to put into words the significance she attached to the saying It was a long story, and Barbet did not know the beginning of it Instead she asked

"What has happened to us, Barbet? It is true that we are nearer to each other than we have ever been It is I who have changed, not you. Until now, I have always loved because I was hungry I have always said that love must have something to feed on But our love has had little to feed on—for months, nothing—and yet it has grown and deepened "

Even now, she thought I must separate myself from him, though we love each other, it is not safe that we should be together, and she cried out silently within herself Shall we never be together, he and I? and she wondered whether their parting would drag at his heart as it dragged at hers

I must take you to Cugnot s, she said We must not stay here"

He reached for her and held her, all his long absence poured into the present touch.

"Let us stay a little while" he said

That he should long for her and beseech her was too sweet for her resolve

Let us stay then. Barbet,' she added, "remember sometimes that I have not the consolations of philosophy The reach of your hand is that to me—even if you are too far away to touch me When I believe you love me, I am proof against all fear, temptation and loneliness. Only give me evidence sometimes that I am in your heart. Oh you are lucky to be the magnet! I know what it is to be that too—but it doesn't ache as the steel aches."

shut up, all my happiest, all my surest thoughts have been of you, Thérèse. We haven't gone away from each other?"

"No," she answered, "and this morning, when you were still asleep, I felt that we were nearer than we had ever been—much nearer," she added, "than we were at Vernon. But that was my fault. It's a fatal habit of mine to invent phrases and then stick to them—like a journalist whose article goes wrong because he has a bad first line. I said that we went to bed together out of politeness. Why did I say that? In some way, at the time, it was necessary to me to say it—playing light comedy, I suppose. There's a kind of pride or stubbornness in me that won't let me take a revolution at a gulp. It was my way of saying that I became your mistress for neither of the reasons that have always been my only reasons—neither because I chiefly and intolerably desired you nor because you chiefly and intolerably desired me—not because to lie with you was a need as important as hunger—but because we loved each other. I wouldn't admit out loud that anything in love was more important, more *real*, than that hunger." She checked herself and sighed. "I am going back on all my old creed," she said. "It was much easier, you know, to be a plain, hungry animal than to love a man as I love you. And anyhow, Barbet, at Vernon, you didn't contradict me."

"No," he agreed, 'I didn't contradict you. It is dangerous for lovers to argue about love. No one has ever been persuaded to love, or to love in a particular way and not in another. It is a revolution that is made alone. It was true of your prison as it was of mine: when you were ready, you would know what to think. That was why I didn't argue—and because I didn't want to." He leaned towards her, drawing her arm across his body, and kissed her. "But our experience at Vernon wasn't false, Therese. Why are people so intolerant of the moods of love? One is sentimental, they say, another is theatrical, another romantic, another animal, another spiritual or real or true; and they condemn one or other of these moods as fiercely as sectarians condemn their rivals' way of worshipping God. But true love is all of these, and what we thought and felt on the balcony at Vernon is no less a part of love than what

'I am sorry, Thérèse. I shall come with you or, if you think that is unwise, I shall go alone. You can drive. I can go by train from the Gare Montparnasse"

Cugnot protested 'But it is madness Your relations are there, Therese says. Your brother and—"

"Victor, Bette, Madame Vincent, the Verviers themselves," Thérese recited with an emphasis, at once amused and despairing, on each name. "Well? What do you suppose will happen? Do you suppose that they won't recognize the bearded merchant seaman?"

'I'm sorry," Barbet repeated 'I can't look ahead to that. If my mother is ill, I must go. I will go independently from Montparnasse."

Cugnot would have intervened again, but Therese waved him aside.

"No," she said to Barbet, "we will drive there together"

It was against reason that he should appear at Vanves. If the balance of argument had been only of filial duty against danger of recapture, or if another man had been concerned, she would have resisted fiercely, but she had learned how to enter into the acceptances of Barbet s mind, because she loved him, she did not mistake his detachment for rashness or fatalism, and, when Cugnot would have spoken, she laid her hand on his arm to silence him.

"Now," she said, don't argue, dear Cugnot. A man who walks out of prison and arrives at *my* flat on a magic carpet is entitled to drive to Vanves if he s mad enough to want to Besides, we don't want to argue We are very happy this evening While you begin your portrait, may we have a drink? I think the merchant seaman loves me And that, if it is true, entitles me to two drinks."

"And to a feast,' Madeleine said "First there will be a pâte, then a coq au chambertin, then cheese for the intelligent or, for those who share Cugnot s tastes, there are mille-feuilles with a Greek jam of rose-petals Now I shall leave you and attend the coq"

Cugnot set out his palette and began to paint. "But what will happen, he exclaimed presently, "if someone calls after the light has gone and Madeleine hasn't begun her drawing?"

Chapter 6

RINGING AND KNOCKING AT THE DOOR WERE left unanswered, it might reasonably be assumed that Mademoiselle Despreux was out of Paris on a Sunday in June, and it was not until the late afternoon, when the charwoman's coming threatened them, that Barbet and Thérèse left the flat, remaining separate on the stairs and in the hall, and not rejoining each other until Thérèse was already in the cab she had summoned and Barbet climbed in beside her

The first thing he asked of Cugnot was a razor, but it was refused "No," said Cugnot, "you will need a change of clothes and none of my *own* will fit you, I am twice as long as you, but once there was a merchant skipper in a picture of mine Here is his kit—jacket, trousers, cap, everything—but you must provide the beard" Barbet put *on the clothes* and wound a scarf round his neck "And the advantage is," Cugnot said, "that, whoever comes, you needn't hide unless it is someone—Schnetz, Quérignon—someone who is bound to know you I will begin a portrait of you now and Madeleine a pencil drawing If a visitor comes by daylight, I am painting you—and you are the model, if by night, Madeleine is continuing her drawing—still you are the model"

"Good," said Barbet "Thank you Can I smoke a pipe? But, you know," he added, "I shan't be a guest very long Soon I must go out and find a cooper's job and take my chance Besides, Thérèse has told me that my mother is ill How ill, Thérèse? Have you told me the truth? Is she dying?"

"I shall be able to tell you to-morrow," Thérèse answered "I have promised to visit her You stay here I will bring you news."

'I am sorry, Thérèse. I shall come with you or, if you think that is unwise, I shall go alone. You can drive. I can go by train from the Gare Montparnasse"

Cugnot protested. "But it is madness. Your relations are there, Thérèse says. Your brother and—"

"Victor, Bette, Madame Vincent, the Verviers themselves," Therese recited with an emphasis, at once amused and despairing, on each name. "Well? What do you suppose will happen? Do you suppose that they won't recognize the bearded merchant seaman?"

"I'm sorry," Barbet repeated "I can't look ahead to that If my mother is ill, I must go I will go independently from Montparnasse"

Cugnot would have intervened again, but Thérèse waved him aside.

"No," she said to Barbet, "we will drive there together"

It was against reason that he should appear at Vanves. If the balance of argument had been only of filial duty against danger of recapture, or if another man had been concerned, she would have resisted fiercely, but she had learned how to enter into the acceptances of Barbet's mind, because she loved him, she did not mistake his detachment for rashness or fatalism, and, when Cugnot would have spoken, she laid her hand on his arm to silence him.

'Now," she said, 'don't argue, dear Cugnot. A man who walks out of prison and arrives at *my* flat on a magic carpet is entitled to drive to Vanves if he's mad enough to want to Besides, we don't want to argue We are very happy this evening While you begin your portrait, may we have a drink? I think the merchant seaman loves me And that, if it is true, entitles me to two drinks."

'And to a feast," Madeleine said "First there will be a pâté, then a coq au chambertin, then cheese for the intelligent or, for those who share Cugnot's tastes, there are mille feuilles with a Greek jam of rose-petals. Now I shall leave you and attend the coq"

Cugnot set out his palette and began to paint. "But what will happen he exclaimed presently, "if someone calls after the light has gone and Madeleine hasn't begun her drawing?"

Madeleine was sent for, Thérèse took her place in the kitchen, and, when the drawing and the coq were far enough advanced, the sitting was abandoned They sat down to the pâté and to Clos de Grenouille that Courcelet had bought in Chablis and given to Cugnot. At first, while the others talked and Barbet was full of gaiety, Thérèse was silent, unable to enjoy the evening because it must end and she return to her empty flat on the Quai d'Orléans; but when Barbet, without pause in his imaginary autobiography of the merchant seaman whom he had named Paul Dermoz, reached across the table and put his hand over hers, she was suddenly happy again.

"The magnet to the steel," he said

"'Paul Dermoz'?" said she "Why did you choose that name?"

"'Paul Dermoz' was a barge"

"Near Tripleval? You saw it?"

"Or Port Villez"

"What are you two talking about?" Cugnot cried "Magnet? Steel? Tripleval? Port Villez? Are you talking in code? Go on with your story"

"Yes," said Barbet, "I'm sorry We were talking in code," and he continued the fantastic adventures of Paul Dermoz

Then it is true that he loves me, Thérèse thought, and she dreaded no longer her return to her empty flat on the Quai d'Orléans. The old despairing and bitter mood might return, but this evening was happy, this evening was in brackets, and she began with delight to dispute with Barbet the authentic history of Paul Dermoz

"I ought to know," he said, I am Paul Dermoz. These are his clothes This is his beard"

"If it comes to that," said Thérèse, "I ought to know I loved him. I have had trouble with his beard"

"Did you go on voyages together?" Cugnot inquired

The question, asked innocently as part of the game they were playing, struck at Thérèse, but she did not drop the gaiety of her tone "Together? But yes, there were voyages in bateaux-mouches, there were voyages on the Seine."

"And on the high seas?"

"As for them," said Therese, "you will find their history inscribed on my monument in Pere Lachaise"

She could not resist a temptation to call at the Palais Royal on her way home. To her delight she found Schnetz with Philippe de Courcelet. He was on the edge of a chair, wagging his finger and evidently boiling over with excitement and projects, while Courcelet, leaning far back and with his eyes fixed on the ceiling, was as certainly fighting a battle of defensive indifference They rose as Therese was announced, Courcelet with eyes alight and eyebrows raised in warning, Schnetz eager to give her his news Had she heard that Barbet was free? She admitted that she had been told that posters were out.

Posters?" Schnetz exclaimed "They were out this morning I can tell you, I have been about a bit to-day I have heard what people are saying Yes, yes, I admit that last time I was wrong I said that they wouldn't put him into prison—and into prison he went. But this time I shall not be wrong If they catch the little chap, they'll never dare to put him back again Already the people are singing in the streets. Not much as yet. Groups here and there. Your song, Therese

"Ouvre lui sa porte
Pour l'amour de Dieu!

Bless my soul, you must have heard them yourself It's not so long ago. Which way did you come? The Rue de Rivoli?"

Therese dared not admit that she had come from Montmartre, and not from her own home She thought quickly before replying

"I came by the Quais. I didn't turn up until the Oratoire."

"Ah,' said Schnetz, 'that explains it. But you wait for to-morrow! Wait for the morning papers I have told Courcelet. He ought to warn the Government If Grevy doesn't give that man a pardon, he'll be laughed out of the Élysee. More than that—he'll be howled out."

"Certainly," said Courcelet with a deliberately incredulous smile,

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'Certainly," said Courcelet with a deliberately incredulous smile,

"if, as you seem to expect, my dear Schnetz, the barricades are up in the morning, I will convey your warning in the appropriate quarters"

"You see!" Schnetz exclaimed, pointing at his urbane host, 'he doesn't believe me! What do you say, Thérèse?' Before she could answer, he continued to Courcelet "I tell you it is true You may think it absurd This isn't a political issue and you imagine that nothing except a political issue will ever move Paris But this has appealed to their sense of justice They see Barbet as an innocent man who is being needlessly persecuted And Grevy isn't liked, the Government isn't liked, they are weak and pompous—like soft balloons This thing will prick them I repeat I have been about Paris to day I have made plans I will tell you what I have done First I called on—"

"You had better not say what you have done," Thérèse put in

"Why not?"

She indicated Courcelet, who said "I confess that if I were planning a revolution, I should observe a certain discretion, my friend I am called The Barometer Your experience must tell you that I am not a very trustworthy person"

'Not on this?' cried Schnetz.

"By no means"

"But you are Barbet's friends You are Thérèse's friend"

"Still," said Courcelet, "it is for me to record every change of temperature and pressure Besides, to be frank, I think you are talking nonsense"

Schnetz rose He was deeply and bitterly indignant 'Then I have no more to say May I drive you home, Thérèse?'

'Thank you I shall stay a little while"

"Good God! Have you gone over to the enemy?'

'By no means," she said "I have come to tame him"

When Schnetz was gone, silence followed

"Well?" said Thérèse

"You might suppose," Courcelet replied, 'that an old man as fat and fiery as that was completely harmless. But it is not so The harmless men are those with balanced, critical minds to whom life

is a comedy that they will not allow to swerve into tragedy or farce. Have you ever noticed how many revolutions have been made by men who might have been clowns? Schnetz, ridiculously enough, is dangerous. He pulls a thousand strings and has, in fact, been pulling them. But he is dangerous chiefly because he happens to be right. I still hold the view that no injustice has been done; but that is an academic view; in fact—and only facts matter—Paris has begun to take the bit between its teeth. Before you came, Schnetz was prating about revolution like a student, he wagged his finger at me and flourished 'Forty-Eight under my nose. That did not alarm me. Whatever Schnetz may do or think, your beloved Barbet won't overthrow the Republic. If there is a row, we can crush it in a day. But I look at it from the opposite point of view. Here is a chance of positive gain, very cheap at the price. Give him a pardon, set him free, flourish the trumpets of liberty a little, point out—what is true—that the Prussians would have put him in prison again, and all the women in France including you, my dear Thérèse, will give the Government a pat on the back. And, heaven knows, the Government needs a pat on the back."

"Then I have persuaded you?" said Thérèse. "Or was it Barbet himself who persuaded you?"

"No, I cannot admit that," Courcelet answered, stretching out his hand for her glass. "No injustice has been done, but I see where advantage lies. A wise Government stands firm against stones when there is no alternative to stones, but when, at no cost but a stroke of the pen, stones can be converted into bouquets— In fact," he continued, watching Thérèse's face, "Schnetz isn't the only man who has been busy to-day. I too have paid my calls. I began naturally at the Ministry of the Interior."

"And then?"

"The Ministry of Justice."

"With what result?"

"At present none, but Government departments are like actresses—their appetite for bouquets increases."

"To-morrow, then?"

"Ah, Thérèse, I am not a magician, but to-morrow at eleven I am

to call at the Élysée to discuss—well, no matter what it is that I am to discuss."

"Not Barbet?"

"In fact, the Bourse."

Therese smiled. "You are stubborn, Philippe. I wish you would admit that you are persuaded and that it is Barbet himself who has persuaded you."

"Well," said Courcelet, "you know me. You must judge for yourself. Is there any other man who, if I found him in your bed on Saturday night, would send me off to the Élysée at eleven o'clock on Monday morning? Your vine-grower has never worked a more improbable miracle. The odd thing is that he should have worked it in his sleep."

Therèse called early at Cugnot's studio and drove out to Vanves with Barbet at her side. If she had delayed until the afternoon, as she had intended, she might have found none but Madame Vincent and Madame Verviers in the house; arriving in the morning, she must, she knew, face Anton, Victor and Bette, and she tried to warn Barbet that she would be unwelcome.

"I shall not be allowed to see your mother."

"Certainly you shall see her," Barbet answered. "We will go to her together."

"But Anton and Bette—oh, Barbet, they will argue and argue. Not only about me. At sight of you, they will hold up their hands and cluck. How did you escape? Where have you been? How does it happen that you and I are arriving together? And there's the phylloxera. I didn't tell you of that. The phylloxera has struck your vines. Anton and Victor want to go back on their bargain. They want their money back."

"Nonsense," Barbet answered with a firmness that surprised her, "the place is sold. What is done is done. As for their questions—leave them to me, Therèse."

She was so well accustomed to fighting her own battles that to find all initiative taken from her by him was a cause of happiness and peace in her. He had a single purpose—to be with his mother—and,

though his manner was as gentle as ever, throughout that day he allowed nothing to stand in the way of it and would look forward to nothing beyond it. Finding the gate and the front door open, he walked in unannounced In the Verviers' little parlour the whole family was assembled, except Madame Vincent and Monsieur Verviers, who was presumably at his bank. As Barbet was about to enter, he took Therese's hand for an instant, then released it. In the room, he greeted them all generally, and before they could question him, said

"I have come to see mother So has Therèse. Will you take us to her?"

"Therese—" Bette began.

"Therese is with me."

The questions began to flow

"Yes," Barbet said, 'it is true. I have escaped from prison. As you see, I am in Paris. As you know, there is a price on my head I have a beard because I have grown it. I am wearing these clothes because they have been given me to wear That covers the whole ground You can tell the police I am here or not tell them. It makes no difference All that will come afterwards. Meanwhile, which is mother's room?'

They told him—up the stairs, the second door on the right.

'Is no one with her?'

"Madame Vincent," Anton replied "The doctor has been He has just gone He was talking to us in this room That is why we are here"

'How is she?"

Sinking"

'Dying?"

For the most part unconscious."

I will go up

Therese followed him. Why did one always smile at the strength of his will? If some loud voiced man, called ruthless, had shouted the company down, had rejected all questioning and stridently insisted upon having his own way, she would not have smiled The effect had been the same. All the difficulties and discussions and

to call at the Élysée to discuss—well, no matter what it is that I am to discuss."

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tions of her mind were blurred, but she felt at the same time, and with a sense of fulfilment rather than of contradiction, that it was Barbet who was lying there. The walls dividing the individualities of mother and son were dissolved for her also and she knew that for an instant she was a sharer in Barbet's own perception. The instant passed. She saw Barbet sitting beside her, his legs crossed, his hands clasped about his knee, and she heard the clock again

This vigil continued many hours. Others came and went, and Barbet was not disturbed by them. Twice he rose and touched his mother's face, then returned to his chair In the late afternoon, her eyelids closed and she said,

"The door was open, Barbet."

"Yes, mother"

"It was foolish of us not to know it until then"

For an hour, she did not speak, then she began

"I supposed once that you would raise me from the dead. It is not necessary" After a little while she added "When you grow old, Therese, do not say good bye to the nightingale. It is not necessary" She sighed deeply 'Nothing vanishes." Then, in a stronger voice, her normal voice "Barbet, please take my face between your hands" When he had done so and kissed her, she opened her eyes, and continued to live until the evening, saying no more and, it might have been supposed, sightless. But Barbet did not take his eyes from hers until she died Then he stood up There were by this time others assembled at the foot of the bed, even Monsieur Verviers, returned from his bank. Barbet looked at them, then again at his mother He took her hand and held it between his own that once more, while it was warm, he might feel the smallness of it. He patted it, as he had often in the past, and, laying it down, bent over to whisper in her ear Then he straightened himself slowly and went out, signing that Therese should follow him

At the head of the stairs, where the bracket lamp had not been lighted, he compelled himself to say "I will take you to your carriage" On the last words, his voice shook, as he went forward, he misjudged the step, stumbled, and recovered himself with a hand thrust against the wall. Thérese put her arm under his, half afraid

delays that she had foreseen as they entered the house had been cut through Not three minutes had passed, they were on their way upstairs together

In his mother's bedroom, Barbet's method was as calmly determined

"Therese and I will sit with her," he said to Madame Vincent "Are there any instructions?"

"None There is no more we can do Even when she is conscious, she recognizes no one"

"Perhaps you would like to rest," Barbet said "But you love her Perhaps you would rather stay?"

"I will stay And if she comes round, I am to call Bette," Madame Vincent said 'She will call the others Quite useless, I am sure She doesn't know who they are"

"Never mind" Barbet answered "Now let us sit down quietly"

Madame Hazard was lying on her back, her head turned to the right so that she faced the window Only the movement of an edge of linen at her throat indicated that she was breathing, her eyes were open, but she seemed to be asleep Therese and Barbet drew up chairs at the side of the bed nearer to the window Madame Vincent sat behind them, against the wall, in the shadow of the curtain

On a bracket behind Therese was a clock which she had noticed while Barbet and Madame Vincent were speaking together, was of wood, in the form of a Swiss chalet At first while she watched Madame Hazard she heard its ticking but afterwards became unaware of it the sound being absorbed in the quiet of her mind As though a frame had grown up about the area of her vision the scene before her eyes became intensified In watching the head on the pillow, and in her consciousness that Barbet was watching it also, she seemed to be looking into a mirror that held within it reflections of infinite depth, which, as she strove to penetrate them receded, drawing her on and on until she herself was within the mirror and a part of the scene she observed The head on the pillow was Madame Hazard's She did not lose grip on this knowledge or recognition of the features neither her seeing nor the normal distinc-

"I have no more to say," Barbet interrupted.

Anton was alive to the inflexible in his brother's mood. He had, moreover, enough good humour to make him a diplomatist such as no Vincent could be. He resolved to play for time.

"Look here, Barbet," he said. "You are tired to-night. Leave it over until the morning. Leave it over until we are in Roussignac."

"How can he come to Roussignac?" Victor put in. "He is a fugitive. How can he show his face anywhere? If it comes to that, how can he touch his money unless we act as intermediaries? He daren't show his nose in a bank." Then he turned to Barbet. "How do you propose to live this new life of yours?"

"As a cooper—openly, without concealment."

"You will be recognized."

"Perhaps."

"And what do you suppose will happen then?"

"I don't ask." For the first time there was a note of anger in his voice. "Will you never understand? It is simple. I do not ask. Should I have come here if I had first asked whether you would betray me?"

Victor's lips tightened and his face darkened; his mind was quick with arguments by which he would persuade Anton that they must inform the police if they were not to be Barbet's accomplices.

"I am tired," Barbet said. "I am going to my room."

Anton rose with him. He was overawed by the fact of death and ashamed of having discussed business to-night; he would have preferred to postpone such an argument until his mother was in the ground. To make amends, he said:

"You will be visiting her on the way. We will go together, Barbet."

Barbet answered: "No, Anton, her body is dead."

"I sat there all the time with you," said Madame Vincent who had been silent throughout the evening. "I wish she had spoken a word to me. She cannot have known I was there. I should like to go to her now, but I cannot go alone."

"I will go with you," Barbet said and took the old lady's hand.

He and Anton and Madame Vincent went upstairs together. He left them in his mother's room and went to his own and slept.

that he might not accept her help, but he did not withdraw Trying to speak and failing, he yielded a part of his weight to her

Outside, darkness was falling After hesitation at the door and an uncertain turning of his head to right and left, he allowed her to take him across the gravel drive towards the gate This momentary dependence upon her so moved her to grief and happiness that she felt the scalding of tears behind her eyes, and, because the muscles of her own face were tautened, she touched his that she could not clearly see He was crying, but soundlessly, without agony, in the release of one who at last permits himself to sleep when he has long been tired As he moved the garden gate, its bell jangled Telling her to stay, he went up the road to the stables in which her carriage had been lodged and, after a time, returned in it

"I shall see you to-morrow, he said "I shall stay here to-night I wish to settle with my family"

She accepted this and drove back to Paris Barbet remained in the house of the Verviers He had intended to answer whatever questions they wished to ask, to be final, to free himself, but at their melancholy supper they were too decorously mournful to speak of anything but the dead and of the arrangements that must be made for transporting her body to Roussignac and for the printing and distribution of funeral cards After supper, Anton, evidently spurred to it by Victor, drew Barbet aside and broached the subject of the phylloxera He suggested that there was at least a moral obligation on Barbet to resume the estate and return the purchase money, Victor was for the most part silent, knowing perhaps that any argument of his would work against his case, but Bette, mistaking Barbet's stillness for docility, ventured to assume his consent, implying that a man so unworldly as he would not, for the sake of profit, insist on the letter of the law Barbet waited until they were done, then replied that his life in the Maison Hazard was over, that he would not return to it, and that he intended now to lead a new life

"I told you long ago," he said, "that I was going on a voyage That is what I meant"

At this, Victor raised his voice

ment to a pocket, thrust a bundle of notes into his hand. "Look," he said. "You make off. Take your chance. You make off now. That way. Through the chicken run. There's a gate there. Make for the woods and out the other side. I haven't seen you."

"Thank you," Barbet said. "I'll keep the money for a bit if I may. I shall probably need it. And I don't want to be a nuisance to you, Anton, but if once I start running away I shall never stop. What will happen I don't know or how it will all work out, but I intend to lead my own life in my own way."

"And if a house caught fire, wouldn't you walk out of it?" Anton asked.

"Yes," Barbet answered. "And if France were invaded again, I should fight. And if a boy threw a stone at a window beside which I was sitting and the glass flew, my eyes would shut to protect themselves from splinters. There are things that a man resists naturally—different things in different men, and if he says 'No, I have a rule, I won't resist them, I'll let the splinters fly,' then *not* to resist becomes an obsession and his nature breaks up, he isn't a whole man any more. But to be put in prison again is not, for me, an evil of the kind that I resist naturally. It would be much worse to spend my life thinking how I might avoid being caught. I want to keep my mind clear, that's all, Anton. To do that, I must live patiently as regards others, and accept what they do. It is a kind of private civilization after all," he added with a smile. "I don't try to reform the world."

"Do you mean," said Anton, fastening on the point that was of concern to him and speaking with hopeful astonishment, "do you mean that you don't mind going to prison again?"

"I would rather be a cooper. Why? Are you going to put me there? Poor Anton, don't worry about it. They'll let me out in the end, or perhaps they will leave the door open again. Listen!"

There were footsteps on the gravel. Victor came running from the front of the house. At sight of the two brothers quietly talking together, he halted, aware of something incongruous in his panic.

"I went to his room," he exclaimed. "I unlocked the door. He was gone."

Chapter 7

IN THE MORNING, HE FOUND THAT THE DOOR OF his bedroom was locked Victor's intention was clear How very odd, Barbet thought People have a passion for locking doors uselessly Why should Victor suppose that I wish to escape, or in any case, that I should escape in that way? He washed in water from his jug, dressed in his seaman's clothes and looked out of his window. Well, bless my soul, it's too easy, and he let himself down by the water-pipe

As he turned the corner of the house on his way to the front door he met his brother walking in the garden, restlessly and alone.

"Good morning, Anton," he said. "On patrol?"

"No Just strolling, said Anton in a jerkily casual tone, as though he had been caught stealing apples "You came down the drain-pipe of course I told him you would"

"Then why did you lock the door?"

"I didn't"

"Why did he?"

Anton shrugged his shoulders "Why do wasps sting? . . . And partly, I suppose, because there have been men about the place The doctors. Undertakers Don't want them to see you"

"But why, if you are going to give me up?"

Anton scraped the gravel with his boot "Awkward; awkward in many ways" He looked round in embarrassment, wishing to heaven he could think of something to say, and, his eye falling on the blinded windows of the villa, he jerked his thumb at them. "Looks wrong in the sun Like that old doll's house of Bette's with the windows painted black" Then he gripped Barbet's arm, as he had when they were boys adventuring together, and, with a swift move-

ment to a pocket, thrust a bundle of notes into his hand. "Look," he said. "You make off. Take your chance. You make off now. That way. Through the chicken run. There's a gate there. Make for the woods and out the other side. I haven't seen you."

"Thank you," Barbet said. "I'll keep the money for a bit if I may. I shall probably need it. And I don't want to be a nuisance to you, Anton, but if once I start running away I shall never stop. What will happen I don't know or how it will all work out, but I intend to lead my own life in my own way."

"And if a house caught fire, wouldn't you walk out of it?" Anton asked.

"Yes," Barbet answered. "And if France were invaded again, I should fight. And if a boy threw a stone at a window beside which I was sitting and the glass flew, my eyes would shut to protect themselves from splinters. There are things that a man resists naturally—different things in different men, and if he says 'No, I have a rule, I won't resist them, I'll let the splinters fly,' then *not* to resist becomes an obsession and his nature breaks up, he isn't a whole man any more. But to be put in prison again is not, for me, an evil of the kind that I resist naturally. It would be much worse to spend my life thinking how I might avoid being caught. I want to keep my mind clear, that's all, Anton. To do that, I must live patiently as regards others, and accept what they do. It is a kind of private civilization after all," he added with a smile. "I don't try to reform the world."

"Do you mean," said Anton, fastening on the point that was of concern to him and speaking with hopeful astonishment, "do you mean that you don't mind going to prison again?"

"I would rather be a cooper. Why? Are you going to put me there? Poor Anton, don't worry about it. They'll let me out in the end or perhaps they will leave the door open again. Listen!"

There were footsteps on the gravel. Victor came running from the front of the house. At sight of the two brothers quietly talking together, he halted, aware of something incongruous in his panic.

"I went to his room," he exclaimed. "I unlocked the door. He was gone."

"Evidently," said Barbet. "I wish you wouldn't talk about me, Victor, as if I weren't here. I am here. I am not trying to escape. But I am hungry and should like some coffee. Why haven't you already sent for the police?"

Victor's plan had been carefully and rapidly matured. Anton had objected that, if Barbet's own family were to hand him over to the police, they would be brought into contempt. "Very well," Victor had replied, "officially neither of us will appear in it. We will take Barbet to Monsieur de Courcelet and wash our hands of him. Courcelet will do the rest. He is discreet. He will keep our names out of it. You can rely on him. As you know, I have acted for him on more occasions than one."

Anton had unwillingly agreed. As mayor of Roussignac, he could not face the charge of having shielded his brother. Victor and Bette had the capacity of making whatever they proposed seem unavoidable; he knew they were wrong but could think of no answer to them, and his vanity, his fear of their livelier wit, hemmed him in. In any case, if he did not act with Victor, Victor would act alone. He was in a trap and could see no way out of it, now that Barbet had refused to take his chance; but the gloom of theVerviers, the darkened room, the hushed voices, the tiptoeing in homage to the dead, Bette's silent glee and Victor's fiddling with the detail of his triumph—his orders for a hired carriage, his finger licking over the pages of a railway time-table—irked him as they stood round the parlour table, drinking their coffee.

These damned Vincents! he thought. These damned Vincents! and he had the rebellious impulse of a bull on a chain. He imagined himself saying to Barbet: Look, come and join the firm. Join the firm and run the Maison Hazard with me and somehow we'll get all the Vincents out! But Bette was a Vincent. He looked at the formidable pile of her hair, the rolls and curls that seemed to have been baked and glazed. He remembered the steady grinding of her voice when she was determined, and his heart failed him. Postponing the distress of his mind, he said aloud: "Anyhow the coffee is hot. What good coffee it is!"

"Thank you," said Madame Verviers. "I am glad it pleases you."

Anton gathered his strength together and, unable to say, "No, I won't go at all," substituted for it a lesser rebellion—a salve to his conscience or his pride.

"Anyhow, I won't go in your train," he declared, raising his voice with the bluster of a defeated boy. "We will drive all the way. You can put that time-table in the drawer."

Victor would have resisted, but Bette was wiser.

"Sh—sh!" she said in a whisper, pointing at the parlour ceiling. "Not so loud, Anton. Remember poor mother. Of course you are quite right. You shall drive all the way. Victor, you will need a pair of horses."

"Nonsense!" cried Madame Vincent at the top of her voice, beating her spoon against her saucer. "'Poor mother' indeed! Who is your mother? I am."

"Hush, mother, hush! You forget yourself."

"Yes," said Madame Vincent, crestfallen again. "Poor Chouquette. We had a game unfinished, Barbet. There's the score on the shelf. She was winning, too." Madame Vincent's face was suddenly contorted by grief. She wheeled round heavily, as though she had been struck; but the blind was down, she could not look out of the window, and she turned back, her long face awry, and shook as she stood, like a great crow that has battered itself against glass.

To be again in the light and the open air was so great a relief to Anton that, as the hired carriage drove away, he threw up his head and grinned, for all the world as if he were driving out for a day's holiday. Having done so, he was ashamed of himself. Was not his mother dead? Was he not taking his brother to prison? He adjusted his features to the gravity befitting the mayor of Roussignac in such circumstances and slid a glance at the captive seated between Victor and himself.

"I'm glad I am not going home," Barbet said. "I should miss the sound of her, Anton. She pattered, she took such tiny steps. Odd things one remembers. Physical things."

"Yes," said Anton with a rhetorical sigh, "poor mother!"

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ping the driver's back with the knob of his walking-stick, for the carriage had unexpectedly turned into the Rue de Vaugirard.

"Hé! Hé! Straight on. Don't you know your way? We aren't going to the Luxembourg."

"The road's up," said the driver, "at the crossing of the Boulevard d'Enfer," and he drove on steadily, turning into the Rue Cassette. Here, on the left, above a high wall, a little church was striking the hour on a cracked bell, and Barbet was sorry to leave it behind and find himself again in the Rue de Rennes.

A minute later, at sight of St Germain des Prés, he cried out: "Stop. There's my café. If I am going to the scaffold, let us at least give the horses a rest."

Even Victor could not refuse to sit at a table in the sunshine, though he looked continually at his watch and emptied his glass while Barbet and Anton were sipping theirs

"If we don't go on," he said, "Courcelet may have left his rooms and gone to the Ministry of the Interior He looks in there, I believe, most mornings."

So it was They were turned away from the door in the Rue Montpensier

"Why do you want to take me to Monsieur du Courcelet?" said Barbet. "Why not to the police? I have asked you that before and you didn't answer"

"I act for him," Victor answered

"Do you, indeed? In what way?"

"I act for him," Victor repeated impressively "He would expect me to report to him personally a matter of this kind."

"But—"

"That is enough," said Victor

"Oh, leave him alone," said Anton "It does no good, Barbet. It does no good Better Courcelet than the police."

Outside the Élysée a crowd was assembled, a good tempered crowd, laughing and singing and cheering

"I didn't know the President was so popular," said Barbet. "And what an odd song for a crowd to sing under the windows of the Élysée"

"Oh no," said Barbet "But, in this sunshine, she would have laughed and clapped her hands That is gone"

He had placed his seaman's cap on his knees, which were pressed together because Victor, unable to believe that no escape was contemplated, had insisted that all three should squeeze into the back seat Fortunately the carriage was open, the sun was warm and the birds were singing Odd to take a chap to prison on such a morning, Anton thought, and he nudged Barbet with his elbow to express this feeling as well as he could

Barbet appeared to understand him perfectly

"Of course," he said, "if one is going to escape from prison, one ought always to do it in the early summer I escaped on June the 1st" A recollection striking him, he slapped his knee so violently that the seaman's cap rolled to his feet and Victor seized his arm "June the 1st!" he repeated, disregarding Victor 'I had clean forgotten it and so, I think, had she, but it was on the 1st of June that Victor Hugo was buried"

'She?' said Anton

"Therese" Barbet's eyes sparkled 'I remember her saying that no one ought to be buried on the 1st of June Or put in prison, Victor"

Victor frowned but made no answer As the journey proceeded through the Porte Brancion, clinging to the railway as far as the Place du Maine, he found that he was inexplicably in the company of two men who were enjoying themselves He unbuttoned and re-buttoned his jacket and straightened his tie Barbet began to talk to his brother about the Maison Hazard as if there had been no dispute on the subject the night before

"Don't worry about it, Anton Leave it to Pierre to dig up and burn The thing won't spread In any case, the place is worth more than the money if you hold on All the vineyards will be replanted some day You mark my words—they'll find an American root that will flourish even on chalk If you want to gamble, buy vineyards in the Grande Champagne. I said so once to Pierre, but Pierre hasn't the cash—unless Victor lends it to him"

Perhaps Victor did not hear He was leaning forward and tap-

ping the driver's back with the knob of his walking-stick, for the carriage had unexpectedly turned into the Rue de Vaugirard.

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"What was it?"

"Well, I thought it was 'Au Clair de la Lune,' but it can't have been"

At the Ministry of the Interior, Victor asked for Monsieur de Courcelet and filled in a form on buff paper As he handed it in he said to Anton "*I have written a special word on it. We shall be seen at once*"

"Did you put my name?"

"No I thought it better not I thought that, in any case, you would prefer not"

"Oh," said Anton, "that's as may be But I should have thought that, if you had written 'Mayor of Roussignac,' we might have made quicker progress"

"You will see," Victor replied "When we are shown in, you shall speak first"

After half an hour a porter came into the waiting room Its dozen occupants stirred, hoping to be summoned He held Victor's buff form in his hand and called the name 'Vincent" Victor stepped forward

"You are to write here particulars of your business."

'Now, my man," said Victor, "I have waited half an hour and that is more than enough You take that to Monsieur de Courcelet and draw attention to my name Besides, I have written a word that he will understand"

"You are to write here particulars of your business," the messenger repeated

'Give it to me," said Anton, shouldering his way forward 'I m tired of your 'special words,' Victor Why don't you write sense? Ten to one he has forgotten who you are—if he ever remembered Give me the pen"

"Your name won't help,' Victor protested

"It won't be my name!' and Anton scrawled on the paper "HAZARD, Théophile' and, with a final, exasperated flourish, added "Barbet," placing it between brackets and underlining it twice.

In less than three minutes, the messenger had returned Like a

prisoner between two gaolers, Barbet was led upstairs and ushered into a great room with gilded doors and a ceiling dimly flushed with cracked cherubs. The light of the most distant windows drew a luminous rim about Courcelet's head and touched his ears with pink. As they made their way across an archipelago of carpets, he gave no sign of recognition.

"Well, gentlemen, what can I do for you?"

At the sound of this remote voice, Anton halted, shuffled and advanced. It was Victor who had courage to speak.

"My name," he began, "is Victor Vincent. No doubt, sir, you remember me."

"Ah yes Roussignac, is it not?" Courcelet held out his hand to be shaken "Well?"

"This is Monsieur Anton Hazard. . And this—"

Anton rumbled into eloquence He liked his commission ill enough, but if a speech was to be made he would make it

"Monsieur," he began, "you will not fail to appreciate the closeness of family ties or how brother is bound to brother. For this reason, I come here reluctantly—with how much reluctance I find it hard to express My brother and I have lost our mother this morning—or rather last night—we have—"

"'Lost'?" said Courcelet "In what sense 'lost'? Are you reporting a disappearance or a murder?"

Anton gathered control "By death By natural death, monsieur"

"I offer you my sympathy But what has her death to do with me?"

"Nothing, Excellency Nothing, I admit. I spoke of it only to show how reluctant I was to—that is to say, I come here compelled by a sense of duty to lay before you or, rather, to ask your collaboration in what cannot but be an extremely painful and delicate matter when considered from the point of view of—"

As Anton had lost his way, Barbet said "Wouldn't it be simpler, Anton, just to say I am here?"

"As mayor of Roussignac and as the prisoner's brother, it was right that Monsieur Anton Hazard should speak first," said Victor,

smoothly intervening "But we will not waste your time, monsieur. I myself will say briefly—"

"Prisoner?" said Courcelet "What prisoner?"

"This," said Victor, "is Théophile or Barbet Hazard A reward is offered for his apprehension We have brought him with us. We brought him to you, monsieur, rather than to the police, in the hope that you would allow me to use my influence with you to obtain some mitigation of—"

"What influence?"

"Whatever small influence my services—"

"Very well, Vincent Let us say you have done your duty. I bid you good morning" He turned to Anton "I hope things go well in Roussignac, Monsieur Hazard From all I hear, though these are dark days in the vineyards, there is great hope—I have real hope—that the men of science will overcome the phylloxera I rely upon you to use all your influence to persuade the more timid to replant"

"Thank you, sir," said Anton, put at ease by this sudden kindliness of tone "I'm glad to hear you speak as you do I'll do my best"

"As for the prisoner," said Courcelet, his eyes moving to Victor, "there is none A petition was lodged with the Commission des Grâces on Sunday The Commission reported yesterday The pardon was granted this morning"

"On what grounds," said Victor, "if it is permitted to ask?"

"That is an extremely intelligent question," Courcelet replied "If it were possible to see the Élysée from these windows, I would show you the answer to it. As it is, you must choose The grounds of pardon are prescribed justice, humanity or public order As you pass into the Faubourg St Honore, your eyes and ears will assist your choice. . . . But I should like a word with Monsieur Théophile if he would be good enough to remain"

"And now, my friend," said Courcelet, when he and Barbet were alone, "you have not spoken since you came in Perhaps you find the room too large?"

"The vine-leaves are wrong," said Barbet. "Whoever painted the ceiling couldn't paint vine-leaves. . . . I hope it is not, so to speak, your personal ceiling, monsieur?"

"By no means. Strictly I don't even belong to the Ministry. They lend me the room, you may say. I have often observed that the men who paint goddesses and their offspring are extremely ignorant of vine-leaves. One would have expected familiarity with one to have implied knowledge of the other."

"Yes," said Barbet. "I am sure you are right, monsieur." Then he added: "I should value your advice, if I might have it?"

"It is at your disposal."

"Whom should I thank? I am sure there is someone whom I should thank. Not the President, of course. The Commission des Grâces, perhaps?"

"No," said Courcelet, "they are high officials of the Ministry of Justice. They are too impartial to receive gratitude. You might, of course, thank Mademoiselle Despreux. She has never been impartial on any subject, though her liking for you and for me argues a certain breadth of mind. I suppose I take an inhumanly detached view of the whole proceedings. That is my little affectation, and I confess that nothing in them seems to me more remarkable than her choice of a song. After all, she knows her Paris and there's not a living soul who wouldn't have said to her: 'Paris is bitter. Paris is hard. There has never been a time when satirical songs burned with a more cruel acid. If you want your song to bite, the sharper the acid the better.' And yet she, to force the hand of the Government, has the crowd singing 'Au Clair de la Lune'!"

"Yes," said Barbet, "I heard them. I suppose it worked just for that reason."

"For what reason?"

"That it was impossible. . . . But I am taking up your time, monsieur."

"No. . . . Well, yes. . . . Will you dine with me to-night?"

"That is kind of you. I had thought, perhaps, that Thérèse and I—"

"That shall be arranged. Eight. My rooms in the Palais Royal."

Courcelet walked with him towards the door "What are your plans? You understand, of course, that all France is looking for you and that the first journalist who runs you to earth will make a fortune"

"He won't look for me in a cooper's shed," Barbet answered "I shan't be in Paris and I shan't be at Roussignac That's where he *will look*"

"Still a fugitive?"

"Oh no, if he finds me, it won't spoil a barrel"

"And to-night? Presumably not Castor and Pollux? The reporters will be lying in wait on the Quai d'Orléans Would you like a bed with me?"

"Thank you," said Barbet "You are very kind, but there is a little hotel to which I always go No one will look for me there"

After his dinner party that evening, when Barbet and Therese had left him, Courcelet sat down to write

"If there is an inward monitor, whose approval alone is of value and who alone may be permitted by a free man to impose order upon his freedom—in brief, if I am not utterly deceiving myself—I am happy to-night, for my monitor tells me I am entitled to be happy I, who am lazy, or affect laziness, have never acted with more energy than during the past two days, paying calls and asking favours with a spirit that seems scarcely to have been my own Barbet is free, Therese is unquestioningly happy, and nothing is more remarkable than the combination of two assurances in me first, that I did right to secure his liberty, second, that no damage would have come to him if I had failed He is an invulnerable man because—"

Courcelet laid down his pen and moved from writing table to armchair There, on the sofa, Thérèse and Barbet had been sitting half an hour ago, and, remembering their happiness and his own joy in it, he turned away from that didactic 'because and said deliver us from the temptation to lay down rules It was the essence of Barbet's nature that he lived by no rules and yet had order within him, the order not of submission to laws or of conformity to the ideas of others but of his own sense of natural values. And yet, Courcelet said to himself, of what use is it to say that? A rebel, a man of

anarchical mind, any vague and paltry upstart who wished to be conspicuous in his defiances, might claim to have 'his own sense of natural values." The phrase is just a phrase—with truth in it if you know the man, but, if not, meaningless.

He went to his table again and, crossing out his uncompleted sentence, wrote in its place.

"It has been a good evening, memorable to me because there have always been two opposed forces in my life whose opposition has troubled me this evening my sense of that opposition vanished I mean an opposition of ideas on the subject of pleasure. I have brought with me from childhood an association of pleasure with guilt, in my maturity I have repudiated that association and my reason has said with Montaigne that pleasure is among life's principal gains. But have I ever, until to-night, fully believed Montaigne in Montaigne's own sense—that is to say, neither with an aloof, intellectual repudiation of the idea of sin nor with a self-justifying greed for pleasure, but with an acceptance of it as necessarily good in itself because it is a means of communication and to communicate is to live? This, perhaps, has always been Therèse's belief or, rather, her intuition, it gives a special strength to her vitality which has made her dear to me beyond the desire, or the vanity, that first drew me to her, but I understand this retrospectively, having seen her with him she was too reckless or I too suspicious for it to have been possible for me to learn it from her alone But Barbet, so different from her in all else that the idea of love between them is conventionally incredible has a vitality that is recognizably the same in kind with hers He accepts pleasure as he accepts suffering, he is not damaged by them because they do not come to him from outside life but are parts of it, he is not thrown out of his course by 'strokes of fortune because they are not external strokes. And her sense that her life includes these things and is the more alive because of them gives Therese what hitherto I have called her recklessness in pleasure and her courage in disaster That is why they love each other—not that they live, or are ever likely to live, the same lives, but that they are alive in the same way"

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Courcelet read the sheets lying before him.

"How wise I am!" he said aloud. "Too wise," and, unable to escape from a view of himself playing his little scene, he wrote: "Perhaps. Perhaps. Perhaps," and dropped his pages in the waste-paper basket. How depressing it was to know that, in the morning, he would take them out again!

Chapter 8

WHILE THEY WERE IN COURCELET'S ROOMS AND the moment of parting was still separated from them by hours of good company, it had seemed easy to Thérèse that Barbet should go into the country next morning and she stay in Paris. Soon they would meet again

But after they had left the Palais Royal and were driving across the river to the Hôtel Bagnolet, Barbet asked her why she was troubled. The question, piercing her guard, showed to her that she was guarded

"I'm not, Barbet It is best that you should be out of Paris for a time if you are to be left in peace Later I can come to you or you to me We are together, we are each other's, that makes it easier to part for a little while, not harder"

She had been able to say this because while she spoke, he had still been near her, and even when she had left him on the pavement at the entrance to the Impasse Marcel she held firm in this new assurance of her mind But though it was a genuine and happy assurance, it was still unaccustomed, and in the entrance to her flat, she was struck by a gust of her former loneliness and wished that a letter from him were awaiting her That is foolish, she thought. I am not alone As long as he is alive, I shall never be alone again

Nevertheless, before sleeping she said to herself We are right We *are* right But why should he go to-morrow? Next week would do or the week after, and, in the morning, she awoke uncalled and with the fear in her mind that Barbet's train was steaming out of the station She looked at the time, it was early—so early that if she made haste she might see him again, Mademoiselle d'Austerlitz

would give her coffee, Barbet would come downstairs astonished to find her waiting for him

She dressed and went out. There was no cab in sight and she decided to walk across the bridge towards Notre Dame Her attention was caught by a woman's boot floating in the water What interested her in it was that it had been an elegant boot, not a tramp's Who had thrown it away? Sometimes, she thought with a smile, tramps wear elegant boots with uppers of violet silk and tuck them in under their skirts on the way to Mantes A cab was now appearing on the bridge but the sight of a hat told her that it was occupied Her attention returned to her own feet, then to the swirling boot Behind her the jingle of the cab ceased She had no wish to be recognized and kept her back turned A hand was laid on her arm

"Barbet! Why are you here?"

"I came for you Yesterday, you know, I bought some clothes and a bag to put them in When I woke this morning, there was the bag—packed"

She smiled at him, understanding too well the melancholy of luggage to miss the train of his thought

"I was on my way to you," she answered "It isn't that I had changed my mind I was coming to see you off At least I think I was"

"I might have been in prison to-day," Barbet replied "If I had been, I should have thought 'If only I could have to-day on the river with Therese!' What is to day?"

"Wednesday"

"I mean the date"

"The 9th of June"

"We will have it on the river, Thérèse Monsieur de Courcelet's journalists won't look for us in the Gabrielle d'Estrees I will go to-morrow instead of to-day"

"To-day!" she answered "Forget to-morrow What shall we do until ten thirty-one?"

They paid the cabman and seated themselves at a café at the farther end of the Pont St Louis where it joined the Quai aux Fleurs

"The President may have reprieved you yesterday but we have

repneved ourselves to-day," Thérèse said as she drank her coffee. She was filled with the magical joy of contrast, comparing the delight of what was with the emptiness of what might have been, and though Barbet took his pleasure more steadily she knew that he too was thinking: All day! All day! Some instants are so precious in themselves that they cannot be used; the art of life is to waste them; and she prayed that Barbet would not move or suggest that they should go

Stay at table till I've *finished*
Stay in bed till I'm *awake!*

So well was her prayer answered that, in the end, it was she who paid the bill without his noticing that she paid it, and said· "Come and walk in my back garden It is mine because I see it from my window," and they went towards the river across the space in which the archbishop's palace had formerly stood, she, in her imagination, watching them from her window as they walked A shudder of sadness passed through her—that tick of a clock in an empty room which lovers hear when they are happy and together

Suppose,' she said, "we were to stop here by that fountain After all, there are dragons and angels Suppose we were to stop here and not move"

"I know, he answered "I feel that Thérèse—in spite of the dragons and angels—I want to kiss you here"

"Kiss me she said, and afterwards "Why?"

'Because for a moment, it does stop the clock Now, Therese, we walk round the cathedral In front of it we find a cab The cab takes us to the Gare St Lazare."

For another moment she hesitated "Good bye, dragons and angels"

Never say good bye to the nightingale, Therèse. It is not necessary'

I wonder

In any case, said Barbet, "it's a June morning and no war"

The train left so punctually at ten thirty-one that clocks seemed to be on their side, not against them, and at Mantes the stress of hap-

piness gave place to its ease, its urgency to an infinite leisure Each forbore to ask the other where they were going—to Vernon? to La Roche? Distance as well as time should be unquestioned, in any case there was, as they knew by experience, time to spare before the Gabrielle d'Estrées began her voyage This evening, Therese thought, we shall dine together in Paris, and for a moment was glad, then drove the thought away She would not think of this evening, nor to-day would she count the hours

When, as they came downhill towards the river, the bridge lay before them, they were still so early that they turned back and to the right, passing through a narrow street into the wide sloping square from the crest of which the church looked down, its two towers reaching up into an enchantment of sunlight and windy clouds, its loveliness fortified by its high solitude No one was in the square but an aproned child with a great roll of bread under her arm, and no one was on the steps of the church Barbet and Thérèse looked in through the open doors at five distant windows throwing down their blue

"There is a bird in the nave, said Barbet "I wonder how long he has been here Look, he is tired and resting"

"He will never get out," Thérese answered 'He will fly and fly and hurt himself and never get out"

Barbet took her arm and withdrew her into the shadow "He will have seen us move We may have shown him the door"

They waited silently The bird flew past them through the door as if he had always known his way

Thérese's hand tightened on Barbet's arm, her fingers moved on his wrist "I should feel as if I had found the last line of a sonnet," she said

"Why?" Barbet asked He walked with her across the face of the church, forgetting to seek an answer to his question because above one of the doors was a carving that interested and puzzled him—a battered carving of an angel, perhaps the angel of the resurrection, at an open tomb From the tomb were protruding cerements that had been cast off, and beside it a knight in armour lay upon the

ground. Above him another armoured knight appeared to be floating in the air What this carving had lost in the years and what it represented they were uncertain, but it carried their minds and their talk away to another day long ago as full as this of breeze and sun light, with the same tension of the body the same taste of life upon the lips, and they thought of the unknown sculptor working on the stone and afterwards standing where they stood to look at it and walking home to his dinner To their left, there was an archway from which a flight of steps ran down to narrow streets. This is his short cut home, Therese said. Barbet followed her Together they leaned on the parapet at the head of the steps, looking at the pair of mean alleys, the Rue du Fort and the Rue Monteclair, which, twenty feet below them, clipped the houses in a thin V In them Thérese saw the life of the old town and imagined her sculptor disappearing down the Rue du Fort.

I agree with Philip Augustus, she said "We will go into the church and visit him Do you think they would bury me here if I asked them?

I thought you had chosen Pere-Lachaise—next to Rachel'

Well she answered with the delight she had always in Barbet s playing her game with her it s hard to choose Rachel is near to Héloise But might not my heart like Philip Augustus s, still be buried in Mantes?

It did not trouble their minds that time was passing They went into the church together and walked through it slowly glad of its coolness When they came out they had but to return to the bridge and follow the plane trees sloping down to the Quai de la Tour at the end of the slope they would find the cafe at which they had wasted a year ago and at the landing-stage the Gabrielle d Estrees would be lying When they found that the Gabrielle d Estrees was gone they felt no shock of surprise It was as if they had known she would be gone

That said Therèse is the second time we have missed the Gabrielle d Estrees"

They went on the landing stage together and looked across the

river at the poplars and willows of the Île des Dames, and at a small boat approaching them under sail, leaning on her bow-wave, the wind abeam.

"You would think," said Barbet, "that to miss the only boat of the day—it's very odd, I don't feel in the least as I should if I had missed a train."

The sailing-boat put her helm down and came up sharply alongside. Her occupant, a man of not more than middle age but with wrinkles so few and deep that they appeared to have been sliced in his face with a knife, handed her along the landing stage towards a ring to which he made fast. He then disembarked, acknowledged Thérese's and Barbet's existence with a nod and a good morning, and began a lively conversation with a youth who had run out of the café to meet him and whose employer he seemed to be. Thérèse looked over her shoulder at the café and read on its board the name of its proprietor. What had served for Monsieur Jugiaud at Vernon would serve again here and she said to the stranger:

"Monsieur Guélin?" He bowed and declared himself at her service. "We were admiring," she said, "the way you came alongside. Until the last moment, it looked as if you were going to run us down."

"Never," he said with a wink, "not if you know your boat. I've known this one too long."

"Too long?"

"Oh, she's a good boat. But she's old. I have a new one on order. Should have had her by now. This one," he continued, giving her gunwale an affectionate jolt with his foot, "she's good enough when she's running but you can't keep her close to the wind."

"I suppose you wouldn't let her to us for the day?"

Monsieur Guélin looked from her to Barbet, estimating his seamanship. "Where do you want to go to?"

"Down river," Thérèse replied at hazard. "La Roche perhaps."

"La Roche! Well, you might get there with the wind and the stream, but you'll never come back, mademoiselle. Never in the world."

The subject appeared to be dismissed. He turned to the youth from the cafe: "Where's that board?"

A board mounted on a pole was lying face downwards on the landing stage. It was given to him and he began to set it up in the stern sheets On it was painted: Boat for Sale

"How much?"

The wrinkles deepened and the intervening table-lands of brown and glossy flesh came up about the eyes. "Three hundred francs"

She took the money from her purse and held it out

"Thérèse," said Barbet, "she's not worth half of that"

She continued to hold it out Monsieur Guelin took it with becoming shame.

'She's yours," said he

"She is," said Therese, "if you include provisions in the price"

"Why, yes," Monsieur Guélin replied. "You are welcome to what we have Would you come in and choose?"

Barbet, at the prospect of seamanship, had dropped on his knees to examine the tackle

"What on earth do you carry so much money for?" he asked over his shoulder

"To buy ships," said Thérèse

It was true that the wind's direction was that in which they wished to go but the river moved in wide curves and Barbet had need of his seamanship After a little while, he found their boat easy to manage, lazy but good tempered and without vice While he sailed, he had leisure to watch Therese against a background of trees and water that changed continually and to talk to her of little things belonging, minute by minute, to their present experience together The handling of rope and sail was as pleasing to him as the use of a cooper's tools, and the steady flow of the water, the pull, the slackening and the refilling of the sail gave to the morning and the early afternoon a timeless continuity that rested all questioning

In the full bend of Rolleboise, where the river, turning under the cliff, embraced, in its right bank, a great curving stretch of cul-

tivation and wood, he let down his sail and allowed the boat to drift

"Your tiller," he said "Keep her in mid stream if you can while I unpack the food and drink"

He became aware then that she had not his tranquillity.

"What is it, Thérèse?"

"Everything with us," she said, "happens half by chance and half by intent—just as everything with you seems to happen half by reason and half by miracle You laugh away the miracles I wonder why You say they happen 'naturally,' but that is only a word"

He gave no answer, knowing that she was making an approach to what was in her heart to say, and soon she continued "When I bought this boat—that was half by intent Only half I hadn't changed my mind But when we came down to the landing stage, wasn't the river empty? I looked I know it was And yet when we knew we had missed the Gabrielle d'Estrées and were on the landing-stage, there was this boat coming straight towards me In a moment, she was at my feet"

"Monsieur Guelin was flesh and blood all right," said Barbet with a smile "What theory are you spinning?"

She hesitated and looked at him with entreaty "I can't say it Yes I can I can say anything I think there's a fate in this, Barbet"

He came up from the bottom of the boat and sat beside her "Say what you have to say, Therese"

"You can't live with me I mean, you can't make your life with me in Paris," she said, hardening her tone in obedience to the will in her to speak reasonably and without extravagance "It would be a vile life for you—a cage You must go on your own voyage, Barbet; I know that But I can come with you I can make your life my life If you want to be a cooper in one place, I will live with you and cook for you—I am a good cook If you need to wander, I will wander too I won't be Therese Despreux any more I'll pretend that—" She broke off, hearing her own words. "No I will become—" She could say no more Her hand that was not on the tiller moved up to hide the tears she felt gathering in her eyes, but

neither in life nor—she remembered suddenly—on the stage can a face be hidden easily by one hand, and, in despair, she let it fall again into her lap.

"It's no good," she said. "I *am* Thérèse Despreux. I say I can, I think I can, but in fact I don't let my prisoner go."

They were drifting in to the bank. He moved to hoist the sail and the boat drew forward again. Thérèse yielded the tiller to him and allowed her fingers to drag through the water. Though she had spoken harshly of herself, she was not unhappy or without expectation. And what am I expecting? she thought. To be with him always? To cook and mend for him? Nonsense. I am I and he is he, and life doesn't work out that way. Some day, I suppose, people will learn that, though domestic happiness is the right end to some love stories, it isn't the right end to all of them because it isn't their true end. He and I could force it, but it would be like growing an apple on a pear-tree; there are different kinds of love and different fruits belong to them.

This was a hard creed for a woman who, in her heart and against all reason, wished that a romantically domestic scene might be given her to play in her own life, but she would not hoodwink herself; she clung to her own truth, and permitted to romanticism only the indulgence of hearing her voice say

"Why, if we love each other, can't we be together? I know it is impossible. Why is it impossible? . . . All right," she cried. "I know the answer. Because we are on separate voyages. And because we aren't liars. And yet," she continued, smiling and puckering her forehead, "I am happy and so are you, Barbet. Is that only because now, for a few days and nights, we shall be together?"

"No," he answered. "That isn't the reason."

She put her hand over his on the tiller. "You overestimate me," she said. "But it's true—I haven't gone far, but I have begun, perhaps."

It was possible that they would sleep that night at La Roche Guyon or perhaps at another place, now unknown to them, which would become as precious in memory. To-morrow they would set out on the river again towards Vernon, and on the following day—

promotes increased production of mucus in the respiratory tract, the main indication for expectorants is to liquefy this mucus, which may have become thick and dry Induction of coughing is not usually necessary because the reflex emanating from the irritated bronchial mucosa is adequate stimulation In fact, antitussive measures, aimed at suppressing the cough reflex, may be necessary The choice of expectorant and antitussive measures in the case of a severe asthmatic in distress often requires therapeutic skill which is not contained in the formula of the proprietory medicine, no matter how well compounded

The most efficient and most commonly employed expectorants in allergy are the following

Water:

Hydration is the best insurance for adequate drainage and liquefaction of bronchial secretions Water by mouth when practicable or intravenously in a severe case is an efficient expectorant

Inhaled Steam:

This acts as an excellent liquefier both by hydration and by demulcent action, soothing the irritated bronchial mucosa

Iodides:

This is probably the most useful expectorant in bronchial asthma It is best prescribed in solution as potassium or sodium iodide, but may be employed in the form of syrup of hydriodic acid When not well tolerated in liquid form or taste is especially disturbing, enteric coated tablets may be prescribed

Saturated solution KI gtts v to xv in water t i d p c
Enteric coated tablets KI gr v to gr xv in water t i d p c
Syrup of hydriodic acid one to four teaspoonfuls with water, t i d

Ammonium Chloride.

This is a commonly used expectorant with a very salty taste that is difficult to disguise in liquid form It may be prescribed however in enteric-coated tablets in doses of 0 3 to 0 5 Gm every four hours It is of doubtful value as an expectorant and is gradually falling into disuse

Terpin Hydrate.

This is a common constituent of cough mixtures However in therapeutic doses its action decreases the secretions particularly when the sputum is very liquid Its use in asthma therefore is limited

Ipecac

Syrup of ipecac is used as an expectorant in bronchial asthma in two ways In doses of five to ten drops for children it is described as a true expectorant When given in doses of one teaspoonful it acts as an emetic and in the process of vomiting the trachea and bronchi may be emptied of its accumulated mucus Its expectorant action aside from the emetic quality is questionable

Acetates and Citrates

These in the forms of sodium and potassium citrate and acetate have been considered as expectorants for many years and are common constituents of numerous proprietary cough mixtures Their use is largely empirical there is no conclusive evidence of their efficiency as expectorants

Antitussive Measures

Antitussive measures may be necessary in bronchial asthma particularly when the constant irritating cough induces paroxysms of bronchospasm Complete suppression of the respiratory center must be avoided while reduction

in degree of the cough reflex is being accomplished. The most efficient antitussives are the narcotics which act centrally and, therefore, must be used with great caution. The commonest narcotic antitussive prescribed is codeine which is effective in doses of 5.0 to 15.0 mg. Other narcotic antitussives which may be used are dihydrocodeinone, 5.0 mg, dihydromorphine, 1.0 mg, and methadone, 1.0 mg. Meperidine, intramuscularly, may be used with caution. Morphine is definitely not recommended.

There are several non-narcotic antitussives which have an effect on the cough reflex without generalized narcotic action. These include carbetapentane citrate (Toclase, Pfizer), caramiphen ethanedisulfonate (Toryn, Smith, Kline, and French), and dextromethorphan hydrobromide (Romilar, Roche).

There are numerous proprietary cough mixtures available which incorporate antitussives, expectorants, antihistamines, and often bronchodilators. The formula of these is *often impressive; however, the individual doses of the* principal ingredients are usually insufficient and need to be fortified. As a mere vehicle, their expense may not always be justifiable.

Among the best known mixtures of this type are:

Benylin Expectorant (Parke Davis)
Calcidrine *Syrup* (Abbott)
Cepacol Liquid (Merrell)
Histadyl E.C. Compound (Lilly)
Orthoxicol Syrup (Upjohn)
Pyribenzamine Expectorant (Ciba)
Thephorin Syrup (Roche)
Ambenyl Expectorant (Parke Davis)
Intosen (Squibb)
Extosen (Squibb)
Clistin Expectorant (McNeil)
Hydryllin Compound (Searle)
Mercodol (Merrell)
Phenergan Expectorant (Wyeth)

Becantyl (Horlick) British
Lipect (Wyeth) British
Phensedyl (May and Bayer) British
Pirtex (Allen and Hanbury) British

HORMONES:

The hormones most efficient in allergic disease are the adrenocortical hormones (1) The adrenocorticotropic hormone of the anterior pituitary which stimulates the adrenal cortex to produce adrenal cortical steroids, and (2) the hormones of the adrenal cortex itself The hormones which ultimately are involved in therapy are those of the adrenal cortex. The adrenocorticotropic hormone is referred to as ACTH or corticotropin and is prescribed for its physiological stimulating action on the adrenal The hormones of the adrenal cortex which, in essence, involve substitution therapy are cortisone with its analog prednisone, hydrocortisone with its analog prednisolone and fluorohydrocortisone (fludrocortisone) Since appropriate dosage and method of administration vary with individual disease, these have been described under the proper allergic disease

Although the advent of these hormones in therapeutics has resulted in the reversal of conditions previously considered irreversible their use is not without danger There are many side effects which must be considered when use of the hormones is contemplated Since most of these side effects are physiological reactions to the hormone they may be anticipated and should be dealt with as required Probably most important is the effect of these hormones on the adrenal cortex itself At the present time, it is known that adrenal cortical products inhibit the production of endogenous hormone from the adrenal cortex and eventually result in atrophy of the cortex The implication is that when a patient uses adrenal cortex preparations for some time he fails to produce his own hormone and thus is

unable to cope with stress situations, such as intercurrent infections or surgery, without additional substitution therapy Patients suffering from hypercortisonism due to extended use of adrenocortical hormones may develop acute adrenocortical insufficiency when they are faced with the added stress of a major operation To prevent this, the following dose schedule is recommended

(1) 600 mg cortisone for forty eight hours before elective surgery

(2) 200 mg in first forty eight hours after surgery, 100 to 400 mg intravenous cortisone on hand and ready if symptoms of acute stress develop

(3) gradual reduction to previous dose

Sudden interruption of adrenal corticoid therapy, almost without question, produces an increase in symptoms since the patient has no endogenous hormone to take the place of that previously substituted This explains the need for gradual tapering off of the dosage

Adrenocorticotropic hormone, ACTH produces hypertrophy of the adrenal cortex but inhibits production of the native hormone by the anterior pituitary gland This decrease of the endogenous pituitary hormone requires the same caution and preventive measures as that required for the patient who has been taking adrenal cortex hormone for an extended period of time

The physiological or pharmacological reactions to the use of these hormones which often must be combated if therapy is to be continued or prolonged are numerous and involve many systems of the body These are so well known and have been so greatly popularized that they merely need be mentioned briefly They include interference with salt water balance with resulting edema, sodium retention and potassium depletion, disturbance of the protein metabolism with reversal of nitrogen balance interference with carbohydrate production and storage with ultimate hypergly

cemia, glucosuria and diminished tolerance for glucose, and increase of production of hydrochloric acid and pepsin in the stomach with possible production of peptic ulceration. Other effects occur in the central nervous system to produce marked changes in mood, varying from common euphoria to less common depression and rare cases of psychosis Corticosteroids have an effect on the formation of fibroblasts and are thought to interfere with wound healing Other complications of corticosteroid therapy are activation of old infections, particularly tuberculosis, disturbances in metabolism of fat, osteoporosis, thromboembolic phenomena, reduction in the number of circulating eosinophiles, elevation of blood pressure, and superinfection, which may go unnoticed because of absence of symptoms

Active tuberculosis and peptic ulceration of the stomach or duodenum are usually considered contraindications to the use of these hormones Other conditions, the presence of which relatively contraindicate their use but may allow them to be used with caution, are diabetes, kidney and heart disease, history of an old ulcer, or old healed tuberculous lesion and psychosis When the use of corticosteroid hormones are contemplated over a prolonged period of time, the following adjuvant precautions and additional medication are recommended (1) Low salt diet, (2) high protein diet, (3) potassium chloride, (4) an antacid, such as aluminum hydroxide gel, (5) anticholinegeric drugs, and (6) adrogen-estrogens in older individuals to guard against osteoporosis

When untoward reactions occur, such additional medication as diuretics, insulin antibiotics, and anticoagulants should be prescribed as indicated

The following hormones are in common use

Adrenocorticotropic Hormone (ACTH, Corticotropin)

solutions 20 to 40 units per cc
gel 20 to 40 and 80 units per cc for delayed action
with zinc, 40 units per cc. for delayed action

Cortisone

tablets, 5, 10, and 25 mg
saline suspension, 25 and 50 mg per cc
ophthalmic suspension, 0 5 and 2 5 per cent, with and without antibiotics
ophthalmic ointment, 1 5 per cent, with and without antibiotics

Hydrocortisone

tablets 5 10, 20, and 25 mg
intravenous solution, 5 mg per cc
intramuscular solution 50 mg per cc
ointment, 1 0 and 2 5 per cent with and without antibiotics
lotion, 0 5, 1 0, and 2 5 per cent with and without antibiotics or calamine
cream 1 0 and 2 5 per cent with and without antibiotics
nasal spray, 0 1 per cent with sympathomimetics, antihistamines, and antibiotics
ophthalmic suspension solution and ointment with and without antibiotics
trochees with antibiotics
as micronized powder as snuff for insufflation (British)

Prednisone

tablets 1 0 2 5 and 5 0 mg with and without antacids
tablets with antihistamine
tablets with analgesics

Prednisolone

tablets 1 0 2 5 and 5 0 with and without antacids tranquilizers analgesics
cream 0 5 per cent
ointment 0 5 per cent with antibiotics
eye and ear suspension and ointment 0 25 and 0 5 per cent, with anti infectives
ointment 0 5 per cent with anti infectives
nasal spray 0 2 per cent with antihistamines
lotion, 0 5 per cent with antibiotics

Fluorohydrocortisone (Fludrocortisone)

ointment, 0.1 and 0.2 per cent
lotion 0.05, 0.1, and 0.2 per cent
ointment 0.1 per cent with antibiotic
lotion 0.05 and 0.1 per cent with antibiotic
ophthalmic suspension 0.1 per cent
ophthalmic ointment 0.1 per cent

NOSE DROPS AND SPRAYS; EYE DROPS AND SOLUTIONS:

Nose Drops and Sprays:

The prototype of the nasal drops and sprays is an efficient local vasoconstrictor in a physiological buffered solution. Ephedrine one per cent in normal saline solution, is the commonest. Commercially, other synthetic vasoconstrictors have been substituted or are often added to the ephedrine solution. To combat local infection, one or more antibiotics are frequently added and on the theory that antihistamines have a local effect in allergic conditions, they, too, are sometimes added to the nasal medication. Since hydrocortisone and its analogs are effective when used locally elsewhere, they, also, are occasionally added to some mixtures.

The value of compounds of this nature as nasal drops or sprays is questionable. Ephedrine and other sympathomimetics effectively relieve local symptoms due to edema of the nasal mucosa, but prolonged use produces irritation and the condition referred to as *rhinitis medicamentosa* with aggravation of symptoms, may develop. Antibiotics may be of value in selected cases, but the danger of sensitization is always present. The effect of hydrocortisone and prednisone locally in the nose is speculative; it may prevent rhinitis medicamentosa.

It is virtually impossible to list all the innumerable nasal preparations which include the above mentioned ingredients. It is preferable, as a rule, merely to prescribe the indi

Cortisone

- tablets, 5, 10, and 25 mg
- saline suspension, 25 and 50 mg per cc
- ophthalmic suspension, 0.5 and 2.5 per cent, with and without antibiotics
- *ophthalmic ointment, 1.5 per cent, with and without antibiotics*

Hydrocortisone

- tablets, 5, 10, 20, and 25 mg
- intravenous solution, 5 mg per cc
- intramuscular solution, 50 mg per cc
- ointment, 1.0 and 2.5 per cent with and without antibiotics
- lotion, 0.5, 1.0, and 2.5 per cent, with and without antibiotics or calamine
- cream, 1.0 and 2.5 per cent, with and without antibiotics
- nasal spray, 0.1 per cent with sympathomimetics, antihistamines, and antibiotics
- ophthalmic suspension, solution and ointment with and without antibiotics
- trochees with antibiotics
- as micronized powder as snuff for insufflation (British)

Prednisone

- tablets 1.0, 2.5, and 5.0 mg, with and without antacids
- tablets with antihistamine
- tablets with analgesics

Prednisolone

- *tablets 1.0 2.5 and 5.0 with and without antacids tranquilizers analgesics*
- cream 0.5 per cent
- ointment 0.5 per cent with antibiotics
- eye and ear suspension and ointment, 0.25 and 0.5 per cent, with anti infectives
- ointment 0.5 per cent with anti infectives
- nasal spray, 0.2 per cent with antihistamines
- lotion, 0.5 per cent, with antibiotics

Phenylpropanolamine hydrochloride

with antibiotics
with antihistamines
with other sympathomimetics
with hydrocortisone
Propadrine (Merck Sharp and Dohme)
Hydrospray (Merck Sharp and Dohme)

Methoxamine hydrochloride, 0.5 per cent with and without antibiotics

Vasoxyl (Burroughs and Wellcome)
Aerodrin (Burroughs and Wellcome)

Cyclopentamine hydrochloride 0.5 per cent

Clopane (Lilly)
Histoclopane (Lilly)

Tetrahydrozoline hydrochloride 0.05 and 1.0 per cent

Tyzine (Pfizer)

Mephentermine, 0.5 per cent

Wyamine (Wyeth)

Hydroxyamphetamine hydrobromide

Paredrine (Smith, Kline and French)
Drilitol (Smith Kline and French)
Trisocort (Smith Kline and French)
Vasocort (Smith Kline and French)
Par Pen (Smith Kline and French)

Eye Drops and Solutions

Eye drops and solutions known as collyria are used for soothing the irritated and inflamed eye to combat infection as a local anesthetic and to produce miosis or mydriasis. For ocular use solutions must be free of particulate matter chemically stable nonirritating and sterile. In order to avoid irritation the solution should be buffered to approximate the pH of the tear and lachrymal fluid. The average

cated sympathomimetic in a buffered or physiological solution, and when an additional ingredient, such as an antibiotic, hydrocortisone, or an antihistamine, is desired, to add it to the prescription in the proper strength or specify a particular product The following list comprises many of those which are available

Ephedrine sulfate or hydrochloride, one per cent, in normal salt solution or glucose, with or without antihistamine

Benafedrine (Parke Davis)
Isedrin (Lilly)
Isohalant (Abbott)
Glucofedrin (Parke Davis)
Nadecon (Maw) British
Rhinamid (Bailly) British

Phenylephrine hydrochloride, 0 25, 0 5, and 1 0 per cent

with antihistamines
with antihistamines and other vasoconstrictors
with antibiotics
with antibiotics antihistamines and hydrocortisone
Neosynephrine (Winthrop)
Neophryn (Bayer) British
Fenox (Boots) British
Biomydrin (Nepera)
Isophrin (Broemmel)
N T Z (Winthrop)
Trisocort (Smith Kline and French)
Vasocort (Smith Kline and French)
Alconefrin (Alcon)

Naphazoline hydrochloride, 0 05 and 0 1 per cent

Privine (Ciba)
Glaxo E F *(Glaxo) British*
Fenox (Boots) British

Hormones

hydrocortisone, 0 5 to 2 5 per cent, with and without anti infectives
prednisolone 0 25 to 0 5 per cent with anti infectives
fluorohydrocortisone 0 1 per cent

Anti Infective Agents

tetracycline 1 per cent
chlortetracycline 1 per cent
oxytetracycline 1 25 per cent
chloramphenicol 1 per cent
neomycin 0 5 per cent
bacitracin 500 units per cc
polymyxin B sulfate 5000 units per cc.
gramicidin 0 25 mg per cc
furacin, 02 per cent to 1 per cent
aerosporin 0 1 to 0 25 per cent
sulfacetamide 15 to 30 per cent

Commonly Used Proprietary Ophthalmic Preparations

Privine (Ciba)
Zincfrin (Alcon)
Estivin (Schiefflien)
Isohist Ophthalmic (Broemmel)
Isopto Frin (Alcon)
Collyrium lotion and drops (Wyeth)
Histadyl Ophthalmic Ointment (Lilly)

SEDATIVES, HYPNOTICS, AND TRANQUILIZERS:

This class of drugs has its greatest usefulness in allergic disease where relief of pain burning and itching is essential rest is necessary and sleep is important The difference between sedatives hynotics and tranquilizers is largely one of degree When drugs are used at night to induce sleep, they are called hypnotics when taking during the day to quiet the patient they are known as sedatives Tranquilizer is a popular term introduced to described the mildest type of sedation

*p*H of the tear is 7 2 to 7 4 Therefore, an eye wash or eye drop will be irritating when its *p*H is above 7 8 or below 6 6 The well equipped professional pharmacy is prepared to buffer an eye solution by the use of stock buffers which have been calculated to produce a desired *p*H when added to known ingredients Proprietary eye medications emanating from reputable firms may be assumed to be isotonic

In allergy, eye solutions are necessary to relieve itching, reduce inflammation, and in certain cases, combat infection This involves the use of soothing ingredients, local anesthetics, antihistamines, antibiotics, sulfonamides, and corticosteroids Although this discussion is limited to eye solutions, that is, liquid preparations, the same principles apply to ophthalmic ointments Ointments, however, have a longer lasting effect, and the effect of the vehicle, as in the case of topical dermatological preparations may be as important as that of the main ingredients

The following are the most commonly prescribed and used ophthalmological preparations

Mild Antiseptics, Astringents and Soothing Agents

- boric acid 2 0 to 5 0 per cent
- sodium bicarbonate 0 05 per cent
- sodium chloride 0 9 per cent
- sodium phosphate 0 9 per cent
- acetic acid (1 50) 1 0 per cent
- benzalkonium chloride (1 1000) 20 0 per cent
- zinc sulfate 0 1 to 0 3 per cent
- epinephrine solution (1 1000) 10 0 to 15 0 per cent
- silver nitrate 0 1 to 0 5 per cent

Local Anesthetics

- cocaine, 5 0 per cent
- Holocaine, 1 0 per cent (Winthrop)
- Butyn 2 0 per cent (Abbott)
- Pontocaine, 0 5 per cent (Winthrop)
- Metycaine 2 0 per cent (Lilly)
- Dorsocaine 0 4 per cent (Smith Dorsey)
- Ophthaine, 0 5 per cent (Squibb)

other commonly prescribed barbiturates include butabarbital and thiopental, all these are available as capsules, elixirs, liquids, suppositories, and parenteral solutions.

Bromides:

triple bromides in tablet or elixir form

Paraldehyde:

rectal suppositories 5 0 cc
capsules, 1 0 Gm (15 grains)
ampules, 2 0 5 0, and 10 cc

Chloral Hydrate:

capsules 0 25 to 0 5 Gm per dose
elixir, 0 25 to 0 5 Gm per dose
syrup 0 25 to 0 5 Gm per dose
rectal suppositories, 0 25 to 0 5 Gm per dose

Ether and Oil:

rectal instillation and retention equal parts 150 to 200 cc. per adult dose

Tranquilizers (Ataraxics):

Rauwolfia alkaloids

Reserpine
tablets 0 1 0 25 1 0 2 0, and 4 0 mg
elixir 0 2 and 1 0 mg per teaspoonful
parenteral solution 2 5 mg per cc
Rescinnamine
tablets 0 25 0 5 and 1 0 mg

Propanediol dicarbamate

Meprobamate
Miltown (Wallace) U S A (Lederle) British
Equanil (Wyeth)
Mapavlon (British)

It has been suggested that sedative, hynotic, and tranquilizing drugs be divided into three categories—hypnosedatives, psychosedatives, and neurosedatives In the first classification, the barbiturates, chloral hydrate, morphine, codeine, and other narcotics would fit The psychosedatives theoretically do not sedate nor depress the central nervous system but control agitation and make the patient less disturbed This is the tranquilizer group and includes the rauwolfia alkaloids and phenothiazones The neurosedatives are said to allay anxiety and promote peace of mind These include propanediol dicarbamate, hydroxyzine, and the bromides This classification, to be sure, is arbitrary, it is impossible to predict the action of a specific drug upon a specific patient Furthermore, when prescribing drugs of this class, it is necessary to bear in mind the other physiological activities which they possess The classic sedative, morphine, is also a marked respiratory depressant The rauwolfia products may produce rhinitis and hypotension The phenothiazines have been known to produce blood dyscrasias and jaundice

The following is a partial list of the available and useful drugs of this class

Barbiturates:

secobarbital (quick acting) 0 1 to 0 2 Gm for sleep 1/6 to 1/3 of hypnotic dose is recommended for daytime sedation

amobarbital (longer acting) 0 1 to 0 2 Gm for sleep 1/6 to 1/3 of hypnotic dose is recommended for daytime sedation

pentobarbital (longer acting) 0 1 to 0 2 Gm for sleep 1/6 to 1/2 of hypnotic dose is recommended for daytime sedation

phenobarbital (most prolonged acting) 0 1 to 0 2 Gm for sleep 1/6 to 1/3 of hypnotic dose is recommended for daytime sedation

other commonly prescribed barbiturates include butabarbital and thiopental, all these are available as capsules, elixirs, liquids, suppositories, and parenteral solutions.

Bromides:

triple bromides in tablet or elixir form

Paraldehyde:

rectal suppositories, 5 0 cc
capsules, 1 0 Gm (15 grains)
ampules 2 0 5 0 and 10 cc

Chloral Hydrate:

capsules 0 25 to 0 5 Gm per dose
elixir, 0 25 to 0 5 Gm per dose
syrup 0 25 to 0 5 Gm per dose
rectal suppositories, 0 25 to 0 5 Gm per dose

Ether and Oil:

rectal instillation and retention, equal parts 150 to 200 cc. per adult dose

Tranquilizers (Ataraxics):

Rauwolfia alkaloids

Reserpine
tablets, 0 1 0 25 1 0 2 0 and 4 0 mg
elixir, 0 2 and 1 0 mg per teaspoonful
parenteral solution 2 5 mg per cc
Rescinnamine
tablets 0 25 0 5 and 1 0 mg

Propanediol dicarbamate

Meprobamate
Miltown (Wallace) U S A (Lederle) British
Equanil (Wyeth)
Mapavlon (British)

Phenothiazines

Chlorpromazine
- tablets, 10, 25, and 100 mg
- ampules, 25 and 50 mg
- syrup, 10 mg per teaspoonful
- suppositories, 25 and 100 mg
  - Thorazine (Smith, Kline and French)
  - Largactil (May and Baker) British

Promazine
- tablets, 25, 50, and 100 mg
- parenteral solution, 50 mg per cc
  - Sparine (Wyeth)

Mapazine
- Pacatal (Warner) British (Warner Chilcott) U S A

Diphenyl methanes

Benactyzine
- Nutinal (Boots) British
- Suavital (Glaxo) British (Merck Sharp and Dohme) U S A
- Oblivon (Schering) British

Hydroxyzine
- tablets, 10 and 20 mg
- syrup, 10 mg per teaspoonful
  - Atarax (Roerig)

Azacyclonol
- tablets, 20 mg
- ampules, 5 mg per cc
  - Frenquel (Merrell) British

VITAMINS:

Vitamins, especially vitamin C and ascorbic acid, have been recommended to preserve cell integrity and membrane They are used to some extent for this purpose In addition,

a mixture of vitamins is necessary for allergy patients who are on a very restricted diet where there may be a threat of avitaminosis

There are numerous known vitamins Many are essential to humans and animals others are not and have become obsolete A list of the known vitamins is as follows

TABLE 17

The Known Vitamins

Vitamins	*Synonyms Descriptive Terms*
A A_1	Axerophthal
A_2	From fresh water fish livers
Carotene	
alpha	Plant carotenoids converted to Vitamin A in animal body
beta	
gamma	Provitamins A
Cryptoxanthin	
D	Antirachitic vitamin
D_2	Calciferol activated ergosterol
D_3	Activated 7-dehydrocholesterol
D_4	Activated 22-dehydro-sitosterol
D_5	Activated 7-dehydro sitosterol
E	Antisterility vitamin antioxidant
Tocopherol	
alpha	Possess Vitamin E activity in varying degrees
beta	
gamma	Occur as fat acid esters
delta	
K	Antihemorrhagic vitamin
K_1 K_2	Naturally occurring forms
Menadione	Vitamin K Analog, 2 methyl 1 4 naphthoquinone
C Ascorbic Acid	Antiscorbutic vitamin

Phenothiazines

Chlorpromazine

tablets, 10, 25, and 100 mg
ampules, 25 and 50 mg
syrup, 10 mg per teaspoonful
suppositories, 25 and 100 mg
Thorazine (Smith, Kline and French)
Largactil (May and Baker) British

Promazine

tablets, 25, 50, and 100 mg
parenteral solution, 50 mg per cc
Sparine (Wyeth)

Mapazine

Pacatal (Warner) British (Warner Chilcott) U S A

Diphenyl methanes

Benactyzine

Nutinal (Boots) British
Suavital (Glaxo) British (Merck Sharp and Dohme) U S A
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Hydroxyzine

tablets 10 and 20 mg
syrup, 10 mg per teaspoonful
Atarax (Roerig)

Azacyclonol

tablets 20 mg
ampules 5 mg per cc
Frenquel (Merrell) British

VITAMINS:

Vitamins, especially vitamin C and ascorbic acid, have been recommended to preserve cell integrity and membrane They are used to some extent for this purpose In addition,

TABLE 18

Recommended Daily Vitamin Requirement, National Research Council

Age-Years	Weight Kg (Lb)	Height Cm (In)	Vit A IU	Thiamine Mg	Riboflavin Mg	Niacin Mg	Ascorbic Acid Mg	Vit D IU
Men								
25	65 (143)	170 (67)	5000	1.6	1.6	16	75	—
45	65 (143)	170 (67)	5000	1.5	1.6	15	75	—
65	65 (143)	170 (67)	5000	1.3	1.6	13	75	—
Women								
25	55 (121)	157 (62)	5000	1.2	1.4	12	70	—
45	55 (121)	157 (62)	5000	1.1	1.4	11	70	—
65	55 (121)	157 (62)	5000	1.0	1.4	10	70	—
Pregnant	—	—	6000	1.5	2.0	15	100	400
Lactating	—	—	8000	1.5	2.5	15	150	400
Infants								
1/12–3/12	6 (13)	60 (24)	1500	0.4	0.5	4	30	400
4/12–9/12	10 (22)	75 (30)	1500	0.5	0.9	5	30	400
10/12	9 (20)	70 (28)	1500	0.5	0.8	5	30	400
Children								
1–3	12 (27)	87 (34)	2000	0.6	1.0	6	35	400
4–6	18 (40)	109 (43)	2500	0.8	1.2	8	50	400
7–9	27 (59)	129 (51)	3500	1.0	1.5	10	60	400
Boys								
10–12	35 (78)	144 (57)	4500	1.3	1.8	13	75	400
13–15	49 (108)	163 (64)	5000	1.6	2.1	16	90	400
16–20	63 (139)	175 (69)	5000	1.9	2.5	19	100	400
Girls								
10–12	36 (79)	144 (57)	4500	1.2	1.8	12	85	400
13–15	49 (108)	160 (63)	5000	1.3	2.0	13	80	400
16–20	54 (120)	162 (64)	5000	1.2	1.9	12	80	400

B Vitamins	B complex
thiamin	B_1 antiberiberi vitamin
Riboflavin	B G
Niacin niacinamine	Nicotinic acid and amides antipellagra factor
panthotenic acid	filtrate factor Ca panthotenate
pyridoxine	B_6
biotin	Vitamin H
Folic acid	Several factors
B_{12}	antipernicious anemia factor
B_{13}	growth factor for rats
B_{14}	hemopoietic factor for rats
Choline	sometimes grouped with the B vitamins
Inistol	
p aminobenzoic acid	
F	has been used to designate three different substances has no scientific standing
G	see Riboflavin
H	see biotin
L_1 L_2	lactation factors (obsolete)
M	see folic acid antianemic factor
P	Citrin capillary permeability factor
Factor R	Growth factor for chicks (obsolete)
Factor S	Growth factor for chicks (obsolete)
Factor T	Antithrombocytosis factor (obsolete)
Factor U	Growth factor for chicks (obsolete)
Factor W	Growth factor for rats (obsolete)
Factor X	Obsolete (used first for vitamin E)
Factor Y	Growth factor for rats (obsolete)

From Remington s Practice of Pharmacy Edited by Eric W Martin and E Fullerton Cook Easton Pa The Mack Publishing Co 1956

The recommended daily vitamin requirement of the Nutrition Board of the National Research Council is as follows

TABLE 18

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Men								
25	65 (143)	170 (67)	5000	1 6	1 6	16	75	—
45	65 (143)	170 (67)	5000	1 5	1 6	15	75	—
65	65 (143)	170 (67)	5000	1 3	1 6	13	75	—
Women								
25	55 (121)	157 (62)	5000	1 2	1 4	12	70	
45	55 (121)	157 (62)	5000	1 1	1 4	11	70	—
65	55 (121)	157 (62)	5000	1 0	1 4	10	70	—
Pregnant		—	6000	1 5	2 0	15	100	400
Lactating		—	8000	1 5	2 5	15	150	400
Infants								
1 12 3 12	6 (13)	60 (24)	1500	0 4	0 5	4	30	400
4 12 9 12	10 (22)	75 (30)	1500	0 5	0 9	5	30	400
10 12	9 (20)	70 (28)	1500	0 5	0 8	5	30	400
Children								
1 3	12 (27)	87 (34)	2000	0 6	1 0	6	35	400
4-6	18 (40)	109 (43)	2500	0 8	1 2	8	50	400
7 9	[illegible] (59)	129 (51)	3500	1 0	1 5	10	60	400
Boys								
10 12	35 (78)	144 (57)	4500	1 3	1 8	13	75	400
13 15	49 (108)	163 (64)	5000	1 6	2 1	16	90	400
16-20	63 (139)	175 (69)	5000	1 9	2 5	19	100	400
Girls								
10 12	36 (79)	144 (57)	4500	1 2	1 8	12	85	400
13 15	49 (108)	160 (63)	5000	1 3	2 0	13	80	400
16-20	54 (120)	162 (64)	5000	1 2	1 9	12	80	400

B Vitamins	B complex
thiamin	B_1 antiberiberi vitamin
Riboflavin	B_2 G
Niacin niacinamine	Nicotinic acid and amides antipellagra factor
panthotenic acid	filtrate factor Ca panthotenate
pyridoxine	B_6
biotin	Vitamin H
Folic acid	Several factors
B_{12}	antipernicious anemia factor
B_{13}	growth factor for rats
B_{14}	hemopoietic factor for rats
Choline	sometimes grouped with the B vitamins
Inistol	
p aminobenzoic acid	
F	has been used to designate three different substances has no scientific standing
G	see Riboflavin
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L_1 L_2	lactation factors (obsolete)
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Factor R	Growth factor for chicks (obsolete)
Factor S	Growth factor for chicks (obsolete)
Factor T	Antithrombocytosis factor (obsolete)
Factor U	Growth factor for chicks (obsolete)
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AEROSOLS:

A very effective and commonly employed therapeutic expedient in allergic disease is the use of sprays or mists applied to the nose, throat, or bronchial tract This manner of using a medicament has been employed for vasoconstric tive action on the nasal mucosa, relief of bronchospasm, the delivery of antibiotics to a diseased area, hydration and soothing of a dry and irritated area, and the liquefaction of dried and thickened secretions Medication administered in this way is usually effective However, there are misconceptions regarding the terms atomization, nebulization and vaporization employed in describing the spray or mist, also, there is an overlapping and occasional misunderstanding of the term aerosol The simplest definition of an aerosol is the suspension of particles in a gas Usually, the particles are liquid hence the term *aero*, meaning air or gas, plus *sol*, meaning solution or moisture

An *atomizer* is a device which reduces a liquid to smaller particles so as to produce a spray Air is forced into a reser voir containing air and liquid with pressure on a rubber bulb This forces the fluid out of the reservoir through a tube the diameter of which determines the size of the droplets in the spray The spray is coarse or fine depending on the size of these suspended droplets

When an exceedingly fine spray is desired either a baffle is introduced to the air blowing mechanism or the outflow tube is bent to a ninety degree angle This will reject the larger droplets and return them to the solution at the same time it will allow the very finely suspended droplets to emerge This apparatus is called a *nebulizer* which indicates the fine mist or cloud (nebula) which results

Vaporization refers to the escape of vapor or steam from heated liquids A common example is the escape of steam from the spout of a tea kettle which may be inhaled for its beneficial effect

The number of vitamin products available to the patient today is overwhelming. There are at least seventeen proprietory medicines claiming to contain the therapeutic amounts of vitamin A. There are at least 134 which include vitamin B complex, and 138 which contain multiple vitamin factors. Most of these are unnecessary and may even be harmful unless there is an acute or actual indication for them.

The official American polyvitamin preparations are:

Decavitamin Capsules and Tablets, U.S.P.:

1.5 mg. Vit. A, 5000 U.S.P. units, oleovitamin A
10 micrograms Vit. D, 400 U.S.P. units, Calciferal
75 mg. ascorbic acid
5 mg. calc. pantothenate
2 micrograms cyanocobalamin
0.25 mg. folic acid
20 mg. nicotinamide
2 mg. pyridoxine hydrochloride
3 mg. riboflavin
2 mg. thiamin

Hexavitamin Capsules and Tablets, N.F.:

1.5 mg. Vit. A, 5000 U.S.P. units
10 micrograms Vit. D, 400 U.S.P. units
75 mg. ascorbic acid
2 mg. thiamin
3 mg. riboflavin
20 mg. nicotinamide

Triasyn B Capsules, U.S.P. and Tablets, N.F.:

This is an official B complex mixture containing:
20 mg. thiamin hydrochloride
3.0 mg. riboflavin
20.0 mg. nicotinamide

be effective as they are absorbed into the blood stream Yet, particles which are too small may be exhaled Another fact that must be considered in using nebulization is that the life of a very small particle is brief and it may not persist long enough to reach its proper location

Nebulizers may be used with a hand rubber bulb to force air into the reservoir or the device may be attached to a compressed oxygen tank or air compressor For short intermittent nebulization particularly of sympathomimetics hand nebulization is adequate When continuous or longer sustained nebulization is required, as may be the case when antibiotics or mucolytic agents are the medicaments, additional pressure using an oxygen tank or an air compressor machine are more suitable Among the best known nebulizers are

- Asthmanefrin (Asthmanefrin Co)
- *Breatheasy* (*Breatheasy Distributors*)
- DeVilbiss No 40 41 and 44 (DeVilbiss Co)
- Episcorb (Paschall)
- Medihaler (Riker)
- Parke-Davis Nebulizer (Parke Davis)
- Premo (Premo Pharmaceutical Co)
- Selrodo (Standbury Chemical Co)
- Vaponefrin (Vaponefrin Co)

There are several powder insufflators which are used to deposit a micropowder or dust into the bronchial tract The most commonly used are isopropylarternol powder (Nor Isodrine Abbott) and penicillin powder Other dusts may be used in specific cases

Among the available powder insufflators used for this purpose are

- Aerolator (Abbott)
- DeVilbiss No 58

The solutions which are used for inhalation have been mentioned previously The most popular are

The type of aerosol therapy to be used depends on the condition to be treated and the intent of therapy In allergy, all are used and have their indications

Atomizer:

This is used as a *simple method of introducing drugs* into cavities for their local effect The introduction of drugs into the nose by this means is merely a refinement of nose drop medication, but with the possible advantage that the drug being carried in a finer mist is able to reach less accessible areas Any medication listed under the general category of nose drops may be used with advantage in an atomizer This includes vasoconstrictors as well as antibiotics

When delivery of the drug is required in the throat or the trachea, an atomizer serves adequately As a rule it does not deliver the drug deep in the bronchial tree For this purpose, nebulization is employed

Nebulization:

It has been determined that particles of thirty microns and larger will not pass beyond the trachea when introduced into the bronchial tract Those of ten to thirty microns will reach the terminal bronchioles, sizes of three to ten micron particles will reach the alveolar sacs The choice of the nebulizer or the choice of the particle size depends on the purpose of the procedure *If one wants to deliver an antibiotic to the alveolar sacs,* one must use a nebulizer which is capable of producing a spray with particles less than three microns in diameter If on the other hand one is interested in producing local relief of bronchospasm and edema from the use of a sympathomimetic, a spray with particles from ten to thirty microns is more efficient since smaller particles which lodge in the alveolar sacs can have little local effect on relieving edema and bronchospasms However, they will

have been used in vapor form, their therapeutic effect, however, is questionable Electric steam vaporizers are very efficient and comparatively inexpensive Some have been constructed to operate for eight to ten hours without attention so that continuous vaporization with or without medication is possible as required

epinephrine, 1 100

Suprarenalin (Armour)
Entomist (Warren Teed)
Adrenalin (Parke Davis)
Azodrine (Premo)
Epinephrine (Burroughs Wellcome)
Medihaler Epi (Riker)
Rybar (British)

racemic epinephrine hydrochloride

Breatheasy (Breatheasy Distributors)
Vaponefrin (Vaponefrin Co)
Selrodo (Standbury Chemical Co)
Asthmanefrin (Asthmanefrin Co)
Episcorb (Paschall)

isoproterenol (isoprenaline)

Isonorin (Carroll Dunham Smith)
Isuprel (Winthrop)
Norisodrine (Abbott)
Medihaler Iso (Riker)

For antibiotic action, the following have been recommended

Terramycin Aerosol (Pfizer)
Clopane with Penicillin G (Lilly)
Chloresium Aerosol Solution (Rystan)

For mucolytic action, the following have been used

Alevaire (Winthrop)
Tergemist (Abbot)
Tryptar (Armour)

Vaporization:

Steam inhalation from the spout of a tea kettle has been mentioned as a simple example of therapy by vaporization The uses of steam in mucous membranes are well known and accepted Steam may be used alone or with the addition of medicaments For many years, compound tincture of benzoin, menthol, camphor, eucalyptus, and pine odors

Bibliography for Supplemental Reading

There are several reasons for including a bibliography in a scientific article or textbook The two most obvious are (1) to provide verification of a statement by citing substantiating authority and (2) to indicate to the reader where he may find additional information

A textbook of this nature is not intended to be a mere recital of the author s opinions, these may be considered prejudices It must contain the consensus of opinion and the most acceptable current information on the subject with pertinent explanation and comment Much of the information in this volume is based on personal experience, some is based on the work of others

It is patently impossible to cite authority for each statement made indeed, it should not be necessary However, we recognize that there are aspects of allergic disease which could not be covered within the limits of this book For that reason the following bibliography of articles, editorials and books is included for additional reading

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